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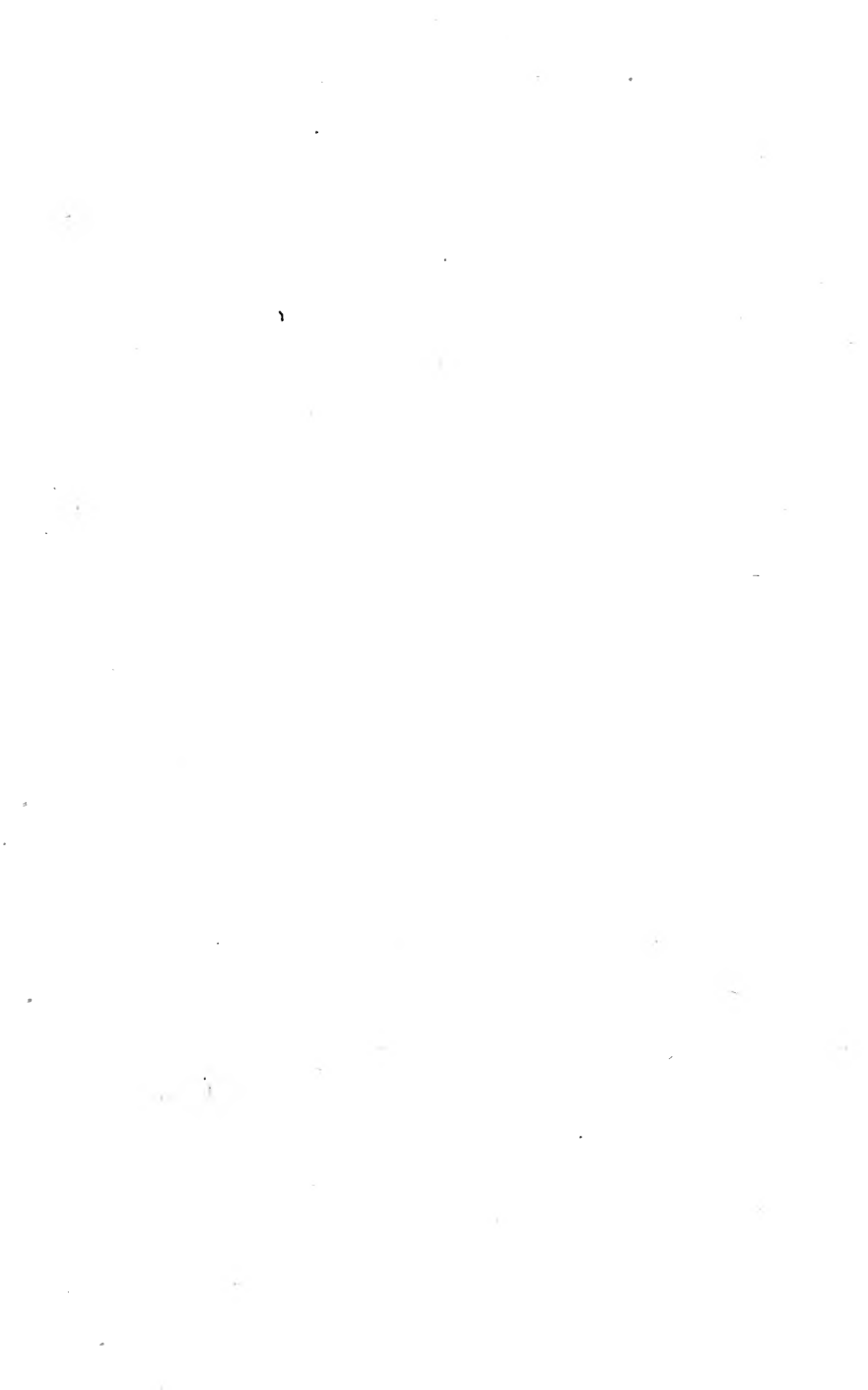
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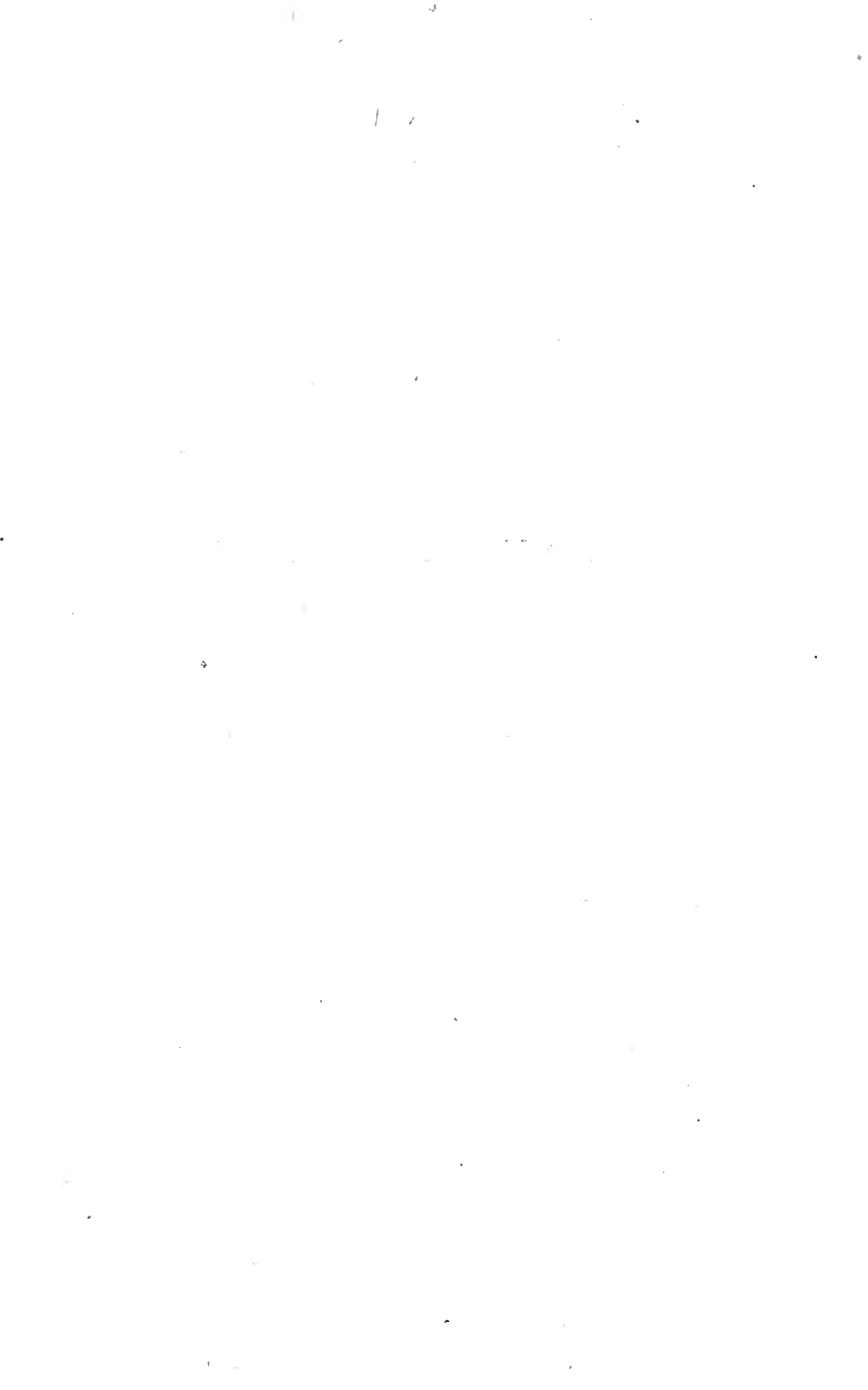


A

COMMENTARY

ON THE

REVELATION.



COMMENTARY
ON THE
REVELATION
OF
St. J O H N.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY BRYCE JOHNSTON, D. D.
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT HOLYWOOD.

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E R R A T A. Vol. II.

Page 20, line 13th, *for* instituted *read* constituted.

30, line 17th, *for* they *read* he.

179, line 22d, *read* men, *with a comma after it, immediately after them-*
selves, and and before will.

269, line 1st, *for* tim *read* time.

325, line 14th, *for* purpose *read* purposes.

326, line 2d, *after* could *read* not.

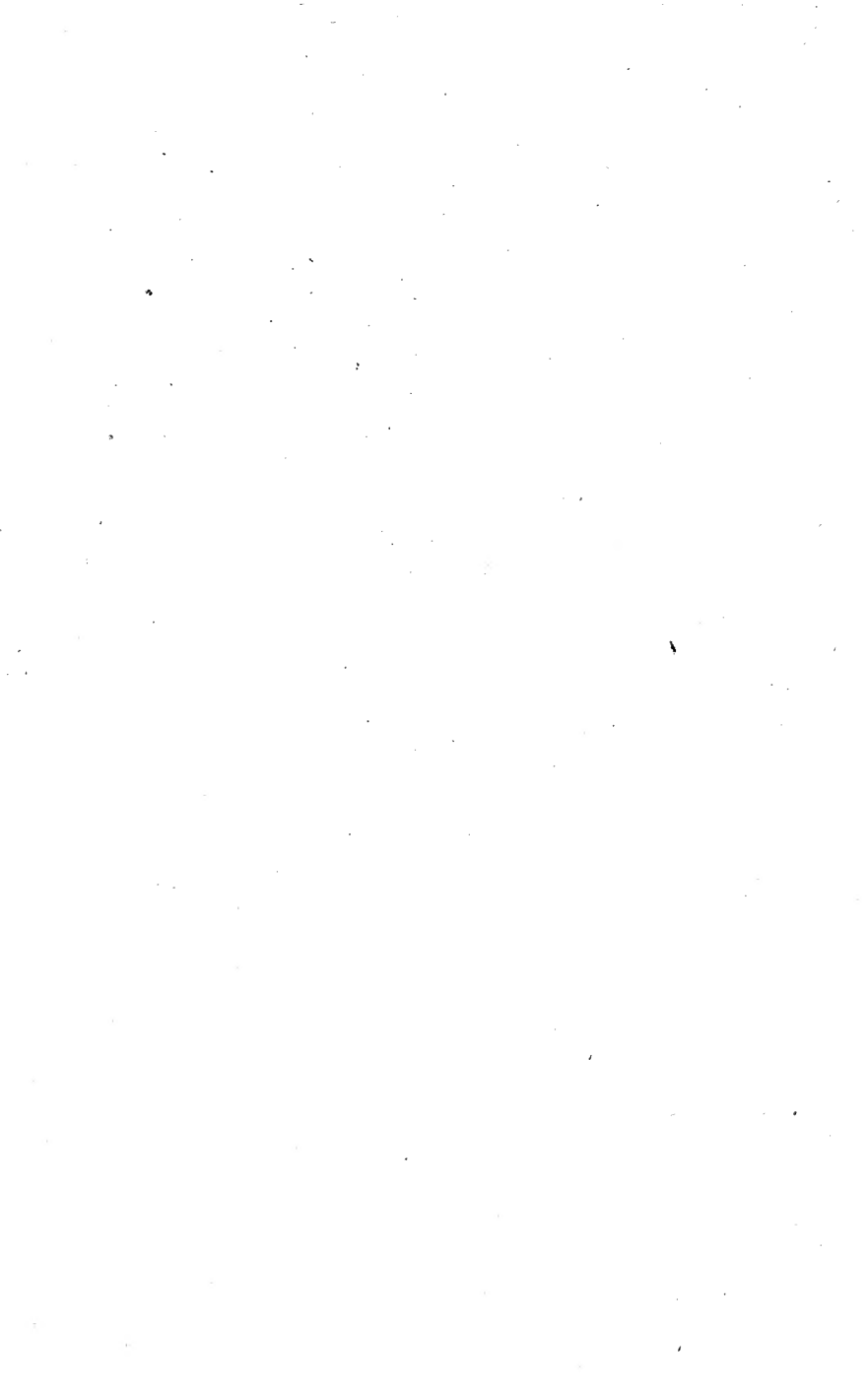
419, line 2d, *for* or *read* of.

422, line 11th, *for* 36, 37, *read* xxxvi. xxxvii.

424, lines 22d, 26th, and 27t h, *for* 150 *read* 1500.

434, line 3d, *for* iv. *read* xlvii.

462, line 19th, *for* which *read* when it.



A
C O M M E N T A R Y
ON THE
R E V E L A T I O N.

V I S I O N VI.

C H A P. XII.

THIS chapter contains an account of the sixth vision which John saw. In it, from verse first to fifth, is contained a comprehensive view of the state and appearance of the Christian church, from the time of the resurrection of Christ to the commencement of the temporal power of the Roman pontiff in the year 756. From verse 6th to the end of the chapter is a comprehensive view of the situation of the Christian church, from the year 756 to the final overthrow of Papal Rome, in the

year 1999. This last part of the chapter foretels events which are cotemporary with the prophesying of the two witnesses in sackcloth in the preceding chapter, the reign of the beast in the following chapter, and the pouring out of the seven vials in the sixteenth chapter. So many cotemporary representations of the situation of the Christian church and of the Roman hierarchy, in different points of view, throw light upon each other, and confirm their meaning.

Verses 1st, 2d.—And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

The word in the original which is translated *wonder*, is *σημεϊον*, which signifies a sign. Signs and wonders are perfectly distinct from each other, and are expressed in the Greek language by words as different from each other as these two words are in the English language. They are both mentioned in Heb. ii. 4. among those ways by which God bore testimony to the declarations of the apostles: “God also bearing them witness, both
“ with signs and wonders, and with divers mira-
“ cles,

“cles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.” In that verse, σημειον is the word in the original which is used for a sign, and τερας for a wonder. All these four ways of divine testimony, by signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, are distinct from one another. To explain the proper import of every one of them would be a deviation from our present subject: A sign is some visible representation, by which a future event, which shall bear a striking resemblance to that sign, is predicted. When an event takes place, which corresponds to that sign, men may be certain, from its correspondence, that it is the one which was signified by the sign.

Both in the Old and New Testament many instances of signs occur. I shall mention only a very few of them, from which the reader may perceive the proper meaning of a sign. Ezekiel iv. 1, 2, 3. “Thou also son of man, take thee a tile, “and lay it before thee, and pourtray upon it the “city, even Jerusalem. And lay siege against it, and “build a fort against it, and cast a mount against “it; set the camp also against it, and set battering “rams against it round about. Moreover, take “thou unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall “of iron between thee and the city, and set thy “face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou “shalt lay siege against it: this shall be a *sign* to “the house of Israel.” Thus, this visible represen-

tation of a siege of the city of Jerusalem is a prophetic *sign* that Jerusalem shall in fact be besieged in a manner strictly correspondent to this model or sign of a siege. Matth. xii. 38, 39, 40. "Then certain of the Scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master we would see a *sign* from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it but the sign of the prophet Jonas. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Here Jonas being three days and three nights in the whale's belly, and afterwards appearing alive on dry ground, is fixed upon as a prophetic sign that Christ should die, be buried, and should rise from the dead on the third day, Luke ii. 11, 12, "For unto you is born this day, in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a *sign* unto you, ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Thus, by their finding a babe lying in a manger, an unusual place, they should see a *sign* of the extraordinary birth of Jesus, and be satisfied of the truth of the declaration of the angel, who told them, "that that day was born a Saviour, who was Christ the Lord."

Hence, when in the verse under our view it is said "there appeared a great *sign* in heaven," the import

import of this expression is, that this vision which John saw, and which is expressed in this hieroglyphic, is a symbolical description of an appearance of the Christian church, by which it may be distinguished from all other churches in the world.

She is like a woman for her beauty, her gentleness, her fruitfulness, and her dependance upon a more powerful person for her protection, provision, and defence.

She is clothed with the sun. Her chief ornament and protection is Christ, the Sun of righteousness. In the natural world, the sun is the centre of motion to all the planets in the solar system, hath light and heat in itself, and reflects these on all the other parts of the system; hence, in the symbolical language, the sun signifies Jesus Christ, who is the centre of knowledge, righteousness and joy to the Christian church, hath these essentially, inherently, and underivedly in himself, and communicates them to every part of his church, in that proportion which best accords to the whole system.

The moon which is a satellite of this earth, and which continually moves round it, which has no light in itself, which reflects the light of the sun only upon the earth, and which shines in the absence of the sun only, is a most striking symbol of the Jewish church. As the moon is a satellite of this earth, that church bore a great resemblance to
the

the kingdoms of this world, in its external ceremonies, pomp, and civil and political laws. As the moon gives no light but what she reflects from the sun, the Mosaic dispensation can be understood only when it is viewed as typical of Christ, the sun in the kingdom of God. As the moon shines only in the absence of the sun, the Mosaic dispensation was in force only until Christ by rising from the dead proved himself to be the Son of God with power, established the Christian church, and made the Mosaic dispensation disappear like the moon at the rising of the sun. Hence, the moon is said to be under the feet of the woman, because the law of Moses was as a schoolmaster to bring men unto Christ; and all its ordinances and ceremonies were accomplished in and abrogated by the death and resurrection of Christ, on which the Christian church was established.

This woman has on her head a crown of twelve stars. Stars always signify ministers of religion. The twelve stars signify the twelve apostles of Christ, the first ministers of religion in the Christian church. They are her crown, because her doctrine, worship, and discipline, exactly correspond to what these apostles taught, and recorded in the sacred scriptures, and because all her real ministers in succeeding ages preach only what was first taught by these apostles. They have no powers as ministers of Christ's church to teach any new doctrine, worship,

worship, or discipline, which were not taught by the twelve apostles of Christ, by divine authority. Thus the apostle Paul, speaking of Christians as a church or collective body, saith, Ephes. ii, 20. “Ye
 “are built upon the foundation of the apostles
 “and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the
 “chief corner stone.” This church, thus constituted, shall bring forth many children. Her votaries and disciples shall be formed through much suffering and with much difficulty.

Verses 3d, 4th, 5th.—And there appeared another wonder in heaven, and Behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads, and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

In these verses, the apostle mentions another sign, (*σημεῖον*), which should appear in the church of Christ; even “a great red dragon, having se-

“ven

“ven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.” This dragon signifies “that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan,” as it is explained in verse 9th of this chapter. By the seven heads with seven crowns upon them, is meant the Roman empire until the termination of the imperial government, with the city of Rome for the seat of government. In chapter xvii. 9, 10. we are informed, that the seven heads signify the seven mountains on which the city of Rome was built, and the seven kings, or forms of civil government which have that city for their seat, as shall be fully shewn in the commentary on that passage. The city of Rome was built on the following seven hills, Palatinus, Cœlius, Capitolinus, Aventinus, Quirinalis, Viminalis, and Esquilinus.

From the foundation of the Roman government to the present day, there have been exactly seven distinct forms of government, which have had the city of Rome, (the *Urbs Septicollis*) for their seat. The distinguished historian, Tacitus, who wrote a little before the time of this vision, says, in his *Annals*, *lib. i. cap. 1.* “Rome was first governed by kings, then by consuls, by dictators, by decemvirs, and by military tribunes with consular authority.” All historians agree, that these five distinct forms of civil government had taken place in succession in Rome, before the commencement of that of emperors. These five were
all

all past, before John saw this vision, as he informs us, chap. xvii. 10. and another, that is, a sixth one, was then in existence. This sixth one was that of the emperors. Domitian, one of these emperors, banished John to the island of Patmos, where the revelation, contained in this book, was made to him.

The sixth or imperial form of government is long ago past, and the seventh, or papal form of civil government, hath continued since the year of Christ 756.

The ten horns are the different kingdoms, which were conquered by the Roman empire, who, during the period of time to which this hieroglyphic refers, were treated as conquered provinces, and were deprived of their regal or independant power. As the strength of some of the fiercest beasts lies in their horns, or rather as their strength is collected and applied to one point by their horns; in the symbolical language; horns signify the collected strength of one body of men under one head, that is, the power of a kingdom under one king. This symbol is uniformly used in this sense, by all the prophets, particularly by Jeremiah xlviii. 25. by Zechariah i. 18. 19. and by Daniel viii. 20, 21. The last of these passages I shall here transcribe, “The ram which thou sawest having two *horns*, are the kingdoms of Media and Persia, and the rough goat is the king of Greece,

“ and the great horn between his eyes is the first king.” In chap. xvii. 12. John expressly says, “ that the ten horns are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet.” That he is there explaining the very ten horns now under our view shall be shewn in our commentary on that verse.

In this hieroglyphic the crowns are upon the seven heads, and not upon the ten horns, to signify that during the period to which it relates, Rome shall be vested with the only supreme independent civil power; and that these provinces, though formerly independent kingdoms, and though, in a future period, they shall again become independent kingdoms, yet during this period shall be stripped of their regal power; but still as conquered provinces shall add to the strength of Rome. In a succeeding period these conquered provinces shall become independent kingdoms, and then they are represented, as in verse 1st of the next chapter, by ten horns with *ten crowns upon them*, while there are no crowns upon the seven heads, but only the name of blasphemy. The plain meaning, therefore, of this sign is, that Satan, not immediately, but by the Roman empire, as an instrument in his hands, shall attempt to destroy the church of Christ. The various attempts, which he shall make, are particularly described in this chapter, and shall be illustrated as they occur.

This dragon is called *great* to signify the great power

power of Rome during the period of this hieroglyphic, and *red* to signify the great quantity of the blood of the martyrs, which should be shed in the different persecutions carried on by the heathen Roman emperors.

By the influence of the Roman emperors, after they should be called Christian, a great proportion of the ministers of Christ's church, stiled the stars of heaven, should be so dazzled and charmed by the outward grandeur and magnificence of the many heathen rites, which, at that period, should be introduced into the worship of those who should call themselves Christians, and so captivated by the great temporal emoluments of the ministerial office, that they should be cast unto the earth. They should no longer continue the ministers of Christ's church, but should become the ministers of the church of Rome, which should then be modelled like the kingdoms of this earth.

The Roman empire should first attempt to destroy, not the woman, but only her child, and that so soon as he should be born. The woman signifies the Christian church, as an organised or constituted church, consisting of a fixed system of doctrine, precepts, worship and discipline conformable to the sacred scriptures of the new testament. Her child signifies all those individual Christians, who, by their belief and obedience of these, are rendered the real votaries of that church. The

first attempt of the Roman power should be, not to corrupt the Christian church, but to kill and destroy individual Christians, and these it should persecute in a very early period of the church. The church should produce a manly race, whom no dangers should intimidate, and no sufferings should depress. A race, who, at a distant period, shall subdue all nations, with a rod of iron, and who, upon the overthrow of the various kingdoms and nations mentioned in prophecy, shall reign triumphant on the earth.

This prediction of ruling all nations, refers to a period long posterior to that in which Rome should persecute individual Christians, as is evident from the word *μελλει*, expressive of futurity, which is used in verse 5th, relative to the time of ruling with a rod of iron. This prediction refers to the same event, and is expressed almost in the same words, with those contained in Psal. ii. 9. and Rev. xix.

15. We are not to suppose that any of these predictions signify that Christians shall, with armies, fight against, and with relentless cruelty destroy the nations, who oppose Christianity and her votaries. It is only signified, that, in the course of Divine providence, instruments shall be raised up at last, completely to overthrow all the nations which oppose the kingdom of Christ, and that the time shall then come, when Christianity and her votaries shall reign triumphant. Some of these nations,

tions, as shall afterwards be shewn in the proper place, shall be the rod of iron, by which, in the course of providence, others of these nations, and particularly the Roman empire shall be broken to pieces.

In the mean time, the child was caught up to God and his throne. The child signifies the same persons, who are represented in chap iv. 4. by the four and twenty elders clothed in white raiment seated round about the throne of God, that is true Christians. True Christians, during that period should make but little figure upon earth, neither they nor their peaceful system of religion should appear very likely to subdue and overcome all nations. As if caught up to the throne of God they should, in some sense, be invisible; because men should not be able to say with absolute certainty that this or that person is a son of the church, a real Christian; not being able to look directly to the real and internal qualities of the understanding and the heart, which form the Christian character; yet, they should all be true worshippers of God, should enjoy communion with him, should be his people and subjects, governed by his law and protected by his power.

The prophecies, contained in these five verses, have been fulfilled, with a most striking exactness, so far as the times, to which they refer, are yet come. The Christian church hath been erected
in

in the world. Her chief glory and support is Christ. Her system of religion is that which was taught by the twelve apostles. The Jewish dispensation was preparatory to the Christian, and was accomplished and abrogated by the death of Christ, that great event which opened up the Christian dispensation. The heathen Roman emperors did not attempt to corrupt the church of Christ in her doctrines, precepts, worship or discipline: But they carried on the most violent and bloody persecutions against individual Christians, her children, as has been shewn under seals 2d, 3d, and 4th, in chap. 6th.

In the reign of Constantine the Great, and of several succeeding emperors, many of the ministers of religion were induced to admit into what might then have been called the church of Rome, rather than the church of Christ, doctrines, modes of worship and rules of conduct and discipline, which were borrowed from heathen theology, and from civil governments. The Christian church had many votaries, notwithstanding all the dangers to which they were exposed. To this day she hath many votaries, who are all known to God, who worship him in spirit and in truth, who enjoy communion with him, who respect his authority and laws, and are protected and defended by him. Though, in some sense, they are invisible to men, they are all known to God. He sees some to be
Christians

Christians whom men do not believe to be such. He knows that some are not Christians, whom many men believe to be Christians. Probably he sees some Christians in churches or societies, in which some men think there are few or perhaps none; and he sees some not to be Christians in churches or societies, where some men think they are almost all Christians. The time is not yet come, when this child of the woman shall rule the nations with a rod of iron. It is still at a considerable distance. The exact time shall appear, as we proceed in this book. When the predicted time shall come, we have the best reason to expect, that the event predicted shall also take place.

Verse 6th.—And the woman fled into the wilderness where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand and two hundred and threescore days.

Having told us in the preceding verse in what situation the child was placed until the time should come when he should rule the nations with a rod of iron; John tells us in this verse in what situation the woman is placed for that period of time. She fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God where she should be fed for 1260 prophetic

prophetic days; that is, as explained in chap. xi. 1, 2. 1243 solar years. When these 1243 years shall commence, and consequently when they shall end, shall appear from the commentary on verse 14th, and shall be still farther cleared up on chapter xiii.

During this period, the church is said to be in the wilderness, in an obscure and distressful situation. During that period, she hath no place prepared of men. There is no visible established church, in which nothing is to be found except what exactly accords to the constitution of the Christian church as it is delineated in the bible, and in which none can be found except those who are real Christians.

But she hath a place prepared of God. He stands in no need of human establishments to preserve his church in the world, nor to transmit his ordinances from one age or country to another. He hath effectually provided for the existence of his church in the world; and he perfectly knows all those scattered individuals every where who entertain just views of the Christian church, and who are her real votaries.

Even in this wilderness state, she shall be fed. Christians, even in the worst times, shall receive as much spiritual food as shall support them in their faith. Every thing considered, the preservation of the church of Christ during this period shall be so extraordinary

extraordinary and so much beyond the natural tendency of ordinary means, that it may well be compared to the miraculous feeding of the Israelites with manna in the wilderness.

Verses 7th, 8th, 9th.—And there was war in heaven ; Michael and his angels fought against the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and his angels : and prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great Dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world : he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Before the woman fled into the wilderness, there was war in heaven between Michael and the Dragon. Michael signifies Jesus Christ. In Daniel chap. x. 13,—21. Michael is represented as contending for, and standing by the servants of God. From the description given of the conduct of Michael in these passages and also in this verse, it is evident that such is the signification of this symbolical name. The very meaning of the word also suggests this interpretation. It is a Hebrew word, which in that language signifies “He who is God.” But Jesus Christ is God. The parties in this war

were, on the one side, Michael and his angels; and on the other, the dragon and his angels. On the one side were Christ and all true Christians; and on the other were the Devil and all those men who had embraced, and attempted to support and propagate those errors in religion which came originally from the Devil, and to the propagation of which he tempts men.

This war was in heaven, the Christian church. In it the Devil and his angels were defeated, banished from heaven, (the Christian church), and cast down to the earth, the Roman empire. The plain meaning of this symbolical representation is, that by the secret temptations of the Devil, through their fondness for pre-eminence, external pomp and riches, many members of the Christian church should take the most effectual method to corrupt the purity and simplicity of the gospel: that on the other hand, many other members of that church, through faith in Christ, a sacred respect for his authority, and the influence of his grace, should adhere so closely to the divine purity and simplicity of the gospel, that no worldly honours, preferments, or emoluments should make them adopt or approve the corruptions introduced by the other members; that the former should adhere to their corruptions, and the latter to the simplicity of the gospel so firmly, that they should separate from and no more hold religious communion

nion with each other ; and that from the time of their separation, the former should become in reality the Roman empire, the only kingdom in the world, during the period to which this prediction refers, known in antient prophecy, and therefore styled the Earth; but that the latter should continue so closely in the purity and simplicity of the gospel, that they should still be called the Kingdom of Heaven, the name which is given to the real church of Christ, both by the prophets and the evangelists.

This prediction was verified in the early and keen contests for pre-eminence among the members of the Christian church, and for uninstituted, (and which is the same thing) for abrogated ceremonies, which took place as early as the days of the apostles ; and which afterwards increased to such a height as to form the huge fabric of the Roman hierarchy, which was completed when Pepin king of France vested the Pope of Rome and his successors with a temporal dominion in Rome in the year of Christ 756.

Verses 10th, 11th, 12th.—And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ : for the accuser of our brethren is cast down,

which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore, rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Wo to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea: for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

In the preceding verse, the separation of the church of Rome from those Christians who adhered to a church instituted according to the simple rule of scripture, is justly represented as a victory obtained over Satan and his disciples. In these verses, the church of Christ is represented as rejoicing on account of that victory. The voice which proclaims this triumph is in heaven, the church of Christ. When the church of Rome appeared in so great outward pomp and shew, and was endowed with such large temporal possessions, the men of the world would imagine that the victory was on the other side; but real Christians judged otherwise, and better. They knew that in matters of religion outward pomp, shew, and temporal possessions are not to be compared with the belief of truth, the pure worship of God, the practice

of universal righteousness, and the enjoyment of real happiness. Therefore, they considered it as a great victory that the attempts of Satan to corrupt the purity and simplicity of the Christian church had been defeated, and that by them he had corrupted only that church and kingdom which was the very opposite to the Christian church. On this occasion they rejoice, because by casting Satan with his disciples out of the church the arm and strength of God and the power of Christ are displayed, and Christianity appears again in that purity in which she offers eternal salvation to her votaries.

These disciples of Jesus, who under his protection and assistance overcame the disciples of Satan, were victorious by the merit of the blood of Christ, and that full confidence which they reposed in it as the only sufficient atonement for the sins of men. It was this which made them despise all the lustrations, penances, masses, and indulgences of the church of Rome. They reasoned justly, when they concluded that if Christ took away sin by the one sacrifice of himself, that if he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world, all these modes of expiating sin are vain, absurd, and impious.

They overcome him also by the word of their testimony. They did not fight with carnal weapons. They knew that fire and sword could ne-

ver enlighten the understanding, convince the judgement, persuade the will, nor purify the heart; but they believed and uniformly expressed the truth, in spite of all opposition. No persecution could make them deny Christ and Christianity, or even cease to give their explicit testimony to them. This testimony was one great instrument, by which under God they overcame Satan and his disciples. It had a natural tendency to victory. Had they been intimidated and silenced, how could the truth have been transmitted to the rising generations, or to men in heathen countries? or how could men have been satisfied that they did believe those truths, which they did not profess? But if their enemies could by no other way hinder them from giving their testimony to the truth, could they not put them to death, and thus completely silence them? This they frequently did, but even by this they could not overthrow the kingdom of Christ, because his disciples loved not their lives unto the death. Death, in all the most terrifying dress which men could give it, could not fright them from their attachment to the truth. They sealed their testimony to the truth with their blood, wherever providence called for such a seal. That firmness, fortitude, and triumph with which they gave their testimony at the stake, and when expiring amid all those worse than savage cruelties with which the Roman empire stands disgraced, in an
age

age in which it boasted of its high civilization and refinement, convinced the spectators that they were serious in the belief of their religion, that it afforded them joys and prospects with which they would not part for property, liberty, and even life itself; and that they were supported by a divine power. By means of their sufferings many were converted to that divine religion which rendered its votaries so far superior to the pleasures and the sufferings of this life, and among these not a few of their persecutors. Thus their blood proved the seed of the church.

On account of this victory thus obtained, the heavens and they that dwell in them, the church of Christ, and all her votaries, are called upon to rejoice. But while this event is a subject of great joy to the church of Christ, it is a cause of wo to the earth, the Roman empire, and to the sea, the fluctuating and dissolved state of those countries over which the heathen empire formerly extended, during the period of time, from the dissolution of the empire by the Goths, Vandals and other barbarous nations, until the empire should be settled again under the Papal government. Great shall be their wo, because the devil shall lead them deep into error, delusion and sin; because he is cast out of the Christian church, and finds it impossible for him completely to deceive God's chosen and sealed ones, and because he knows that the time
allowed

allowed to him to mislead even the votaries of Rome shall be short, when compared with the period of his existence. For, as shall appear from chap. xx. he shall be bound for a 1000 years, and from the time in which he was cast down to the Roman empire in the year 756, to the commencement of these 1000 years there shall be only 1243 years.

Verse 13th.—And when the Dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child.

The heathen Roman emperors, as in verse 4th, persecuted individual Christians, but after the dragon was cast to the earth, after the Papal dominion was erected, Papal Rome persecuted the woman herself, the church of Christ. Now it was, that Rome began to stile the Christian church heretical, and to represent all doctrines, worship and discipline to be wrong and heretical, except those which were established and observed in the church of Rome.

Verse 14th.—And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly unto the wilderness, unto her place:
Where

Where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

The eagle, the bird of Jove, was the standard of Rome. As the eagle flies very high, and far, and lives long, the Roman eagle was the emblem of the height of their power, the extent of their kingdom, and the duration of their empire. But that power should not subdue the kingdom of heaven. The church of Christ, should be provided with two wings of a great eagle, which should carry her beyond the reach of the Roman eagle, small when compared with this one. The two wings of this great eagle seem to be the symbols for the providence and the grace of God. Supported by these, the church of Christ can defy the Roman eagle, and even fly with safety over the gates of hell. This great eagle with these two wings is the bird of the great Jehovah. With this standard the kingdom of Christ shall rise much higher, extend much farther, and continue much longer than that of Rome with the eagle for its standard. Upon these two wings the church of Christ should fly unto a wilderness state from the face of the serpent, and should be preserved and trained up in that state "for a time and times and " half a time."

A time is one year, times are two years, and half a time is half a year; the whole together are three years and an half. Each year consists of 12 months, and each of these months of 30 days, which make 360 days. Hence the time here is exactly the same with the 1260 days mentioned in verse 6th, as relative to the continuance of the wilderness state of the church. For 1260 days are exactly the days of three years and an half. Here, as in verse 6th, it signifies 1243 years. It is evident, that this period commenced at the year of Christ 756, which in next chapter shall be clearly shewn to be the time when the dragon was cast unto the earth. The woman fled unto the wilderness from the persecution of the dragon; but the dragon persecuted the woman, as in verse 13th, only when he saw that he was cast unto the earth. The wilderness state of the church commenced in the year 756, is to continue for 1243 years, and therefore shall terminate in the year 1999. This wilderness state of the church is exactly cotemporary with the treading of the holy city under the foot of the Gentiles for 42 months, which is just three years and an half, or 1260 days; and with the prophesying of the two witnesses for 1260 days, both as in chap. xi. 2, 3.

Verses

Verses 15th, 16th.—And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood, after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

When the dragon perceived that the woman was flying out of his reach, he cast waters out of his mouth like a flood, that she might be carried away by the flood. The flood signifies that great inundation of errors, which the devil at this time introduced into the world, by means of the Papal church. His design was, not that these might be imbibed by that church, but that they might be imbibed by the church of Christ, and that by them she might be carried away from the truth, purity, and simplicity of the gospel. In this design he was disappointed, for the earth helped the woman. The Roman empire, now become Papal, greedily swallowed these errors, and thus, as it were hindered the church of Christ from embracing them. We are not to suppose, that the church of Rome intended to promote the interest of Christ's church, in swallowing up these errors with which the devil designed to carry away the church of Christ. Without intending or knowing it, she proved on-

ly the occasion or instrument of helping the church of Christ.

Verse 17th.—And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

When the devil found that he could not hurt the church of Christ in the wilderness state; that the flood of errors and delusions, with which he intended to have drowned her, had been greedily swallowed up by that church and empire which he had used as instruments in order to destroy her; and that thus, contrary to his intention, or without their knowledge or design, they had actually helped her; he then expressed his rage against the church, by persecuting the remnant of her seed.

Who her seed are we are told, in terms which cannot be misunderstood. “They keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” They are those who in matters of religion strictly adhere to the commandments of God. They do not make void the law of God by human traditions, nor teach or believe as doctrines of God commandments of men. They firmly believe and heartily approve of that testimony which

which is given in the sacred scriptures of the natures, character, offices, and religion of Jesus Christ, and they boldly give their testimony to these. It is scarcely possible to draw a more exact and marked description of the character of true Christians, than this one. If those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus are not Christians, I know not who are Christians. This is a character which will suit no other except Christians. It cannot be said with truth of any others, that they keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. They are called the remnant of his seed, because they are persons of the very same character with her man-child whom the dragon wished to destroy, as in verse 4th.

This prediction was verified in the many Papal persecutions which commenced with the wilderness state of the church, in which great numbers of Christians were put to death, because they kept the commandments of God and had the testimony of Jesus. The persons who suffered under Papal Rome were of the same character, and suffered on the same account with the Christians who suffered under Heathen Rome. It is in relation to these primitive Christian martyrs, that the persons foretold in this verse are called the *remnant* of the woman's seed. In chap. vi, 9. the character of the primitive martyrs, and the cause
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for which they suffered, are expressed in terms of the precise same import with those by which the martyrs under Papal Rome are described in this verse. "They were slain for the word of God and "for the testimony which they held." And in verse 11th of that chapter, when a reference was made to those who should be killed as martyrs under Papal Rome, they are called "their fellow "servants and their brethren, that should be killed as they were." The former of these, the church of Rome extol, canonize, and almost adore as Christian martyrs and saints, while they traduce and anathematise the latter as obstinate heretics. Let any candid intelligent person read with attention the histories of the characters of both, and of the causes for which both these suffered, and they shall clearly perceive, that they both kept the commandments of God, had the testimony of Jesus Christ, were fellow servants of God and brethren, and that they were both slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

C H A P. XIII.

VISION VII.

Verses 1st, 2d, 3d. **A**ND I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise out of the sea, having seven heads, and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads, wounded as it were to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

These verses contain a very minute and striking description of a beast which John saw in vision, and of those circumstances which mark the nature of

of the beast, and the time and place of his appearance.

John informs us, that the sand of the sea was the scene of this vision. In the symbolical language, sea as opposed to earth, signifies a fluctuating, unsettled, and violent state of civil society : Hence, the sand of the sea signifies, like the sand which is situated between the sea and the dry earth, a state of civil society when the convulsions of the preceding fluctuating state are just ending, and the calmness and firmness of established government are just commencing. Such was to be the situation of the Roman empire at the time when this beast should arise.

The word in the original which is here translated *beast*, is θηρίον, which signifies a beast of prey. In ch. iv. 6. beasts are mentioned, but the word in the original in that place is ζῷα, which signifies living creatures, as has already been shewn. In the symbolical language a beast of prey always signifies a *temporal kingdom*, because temporal kingdoms, like beasts of prey, in all ages have preyed upon and swallowed the weaker ones. Like beasts of prey, they make use of force to seize upon other kingdoms. Like beasts of prey, they are in fact restrained by superior force only. It is unnecessary to spend any time in tracing the analogy between temporal kingdoms and beasts of prey, on which this symbol is founded, because this is the explicit and uniform meaning

ing given to it in sacred prophecy, which is a sufficient, and even the best reason for us to understand it in that sense when explaining sacred prophecy. Thus, Daniel vii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Daniel saw four great beasts of prey like a lion, a bear, a leopard, and one of a most monstrous appearance. In verse 17th, which contains an explication of the meaning of these ravenous beasts, it is said: "These great beasts which are four, are four kings which shall arise out of the earth." That by kings are meant kingdoms in that place, is evident from verse 23d, where it is said, "Thus he said, the fourth beast shall be the fourth *kingdom* upon the earth." Indeed, king in prophetic writings signifies not an individual king, but the regal power or kingdom, as is evident from the sequel of that 7th chapter of Daniel, and many other of the prophetic writings. In particular this is the sense, as we are told in chap. xvii. 9,—13, in which this very beast is to be understood, as shall be fully shewn in the commentary on that place.

That this beast signifies the Roman empire, under the Papal form of government, which, as a temporal kingdom, commenced in the year of Christ 756, and which shall continue one until the end of the year 1999, shall, I hope, clearly appear to every candid, intelligent and attentive reader, from the following explication of the various parts of this hieroglyphic.

John stood on the sand of the sea, and saw this beast rise up out of the sea, not out of the earth, like another beast described in verse 11th. This kingdom therefore was to rise out of a fluctuating and dissolved state of civil society, and when the greatest violence of that unfettled state of society had abated considerably.—Accordingly, it was after the Roman empire had been overrun, violently agitated, and even entirely dissolved by the Goths and Vandals, and other northern barbarous nations; it was after the violence of these convulsions had in a good measure subsided; it was after the city of Rome for a considerable time had ceased to be the seat of government, that in the year 756 the Pope was vested with a temporal dominion in Rome by Pepin king of France, as the very first temporal prince there after the dissolution of the empire. That temporal dominion in that seat of government he and his successors have held to this day.

This beast had seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. In chap. xvii. 9, 10. it is said, “The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth, and there are seven kings.” From which, as shall be fully shewn in that place, the seven heads signify that the seat of this temporal kingdom shall be in a city which is built upon seven hills, and that there shall be seven different forms of civil government in succession, which shall
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all have that city for their seat. This description exactly agrees to the Roman empire, and to no other empire which has ever been in the world. For the city of Rome is built upon seven hills, and the present or Papal form of government which did not commence for about 600 years after John wrote this prophecy, is the seventh which hath been established in Rome. These hills and these forms of government have been all named in the commentary on chap. vi, 3. In that place, the Roman empire was represented by a beast with seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads : but here it is represented by a beast with the same seven heads and ten horns, with this difference, that there are ten crowns upon his ten horns, and upon his heads a name of blasphemy. The former represents imperial Rome, when the different kingdoms of the world, such as England, France, and others, were not independent kingdoms, but conquered provinces of the empire ; not only tributary to Rome, but also ruled by Roman governors, for these ten horns had no crowns at that time ; and when Rome herself was the only independent and ruling state in the whole empire, and the city of Rome the only seat of government, for the seven crowns were upon the seven heads. But the latter represents Papal Rome, at a time when these different kingdoms had become independent, and were governed by laws and kings of their own ;

for upon the horns there were now ten crowns ; and when the Roman prince who had his seat of government in the city of Rome was not crowned like a temporal king, did not take a title ever borne by any king, but assumed a blasphemous title ; for upon his heads was the name of blasphemy.

We are not to suppose, that the word blasphemy was inscribed on his heads as his name. The import of this part of the hieroglyphic, though dark in our translation, is perfectly clear in the original language. The particle to which *the* corresponds, is not in the original. There it is simply ὄνομα βλασφημίας, which ought to have been translated *a name of blasphemy*, which signifies, that at this time the prince who should have the city of Rome for his seat of government should assume a blasphemous title. Is not *his Holiness* a blasphemous title, since God only is holy ? But though these ten kingdoms should be independent, *his Holiness*, like their head, should turn them whatever way he pleased, but always by the cords of blasphemous superstition, and by arrogating to himself those absolving powers which it is blasphemy for any man to claim, by which he kept all these kings in awe.

Now to what state and period of the Roman empire does this last description agree ? Is it not to the Papal state ? Did not the various independent kingdoms which rose within the bounds of
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the western empire, arise at the very time the Papal government began in Rome in its temporal character? Did not the Pope assume to himself, and does he not still retain, the blasphemous title of *his Holiness*? Did he not still govern these independent kingdoms by the sceptre of superstition? Though in every other respect they were independent kingdoms, were they not as much under the controul of *his Holiness* of Rome, by the ties of superstition, as if they had still been conquered provinces. It was then that Rome was (chap. xvii. 18.) “that great city which reigneth over *the* “*kings* of the earth.” The apostle Paul in his 2d epistle to the Thessalonians, chap. ii. 4. many hundred years before the event, foretells in the most pointed language the names of blasphemy which should be upon the Papal head of Rome, when he said of him, “who opposeth and exalteth “himself above all that is called God, or that is “worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the “temple of God, shewing himself that he is God,” This description not only exactly agrees to the Papal state of Rome, but it agrees to no other empire and to no other state of that empire.

This beast was partly like a leopard, partly like a bear, partly like a lion. Daniel in chap. vii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. foretold the four great, and as they are commonly called, universal monarchies which were to arise in the earth in succession before that glorious

rious period should come, when in the language of scripture, and even of that chapter, "The kingdom of Christ should come, and all people, nations, and languages should serve him." He says, the first of these was like a lion, the second like a bear, the third like a leopard, and he does not name any particular beast to which the fourth was like, because it was a monster ; but only says, verse vii. "After this I saw in the night vision, and behold a fourth beast dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth, it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it, and it was divers from all the beasts which were before it, and it had ten horns." Interpreters are all agreed, that the first of these beasts is the symbol of the Assyrian, the second of the Persian, the third of the Grecian, and the fourth of the Roman empire, which in fact have all arisen in succession to each other just as Daniel predicted, who lived an illustrious subject of the first of them in the court of one of its kings, in Babylon. He gives us no other particular description of this fourth beast or Roman empire but that it was very fierce and terrible, that it rose after the other three, and had ten horns. When the beast which John saw, not only rose after the other three monarchies were dissolved, not only was very fierce and terrible, not only

only

only had these ten horns, but in some of its parts resembled all the first three beasts, it must be the fourth of these beasts, and the symbol of the Roman empire, which comprehended within its boundaries some parts of the territory of all these three monarchies. Being made up of parts from every one of them, it is here represented by a monstrous beast, which in some of its parts resembles a leopard, in some a bear, and in others a lion.

“The dragon gave this beast his power, his seat, and great authority.” The seat of the dragon was Rome, the city built upon the seven hills, as was shewn chap. xii. 3. Hence the seat of this empire was also to be the city of Rome, and its power was also to be as great as that of Heathen Rome. And it was to have great authority. It was to govern the world more by mere authority, more by opinion, than even by real power. In this last instrument of domination, it was greatly to excel and be distinguished from Heathen Rome. Is not the city of Rome the seat of the Papal empire? Was not its power long as great as that of Heathen Rome? And did it not govern the world much more by mere authority than by real power? Were not the kings of the earth, for a long time, more terrified for the Papal anathemas than ever they were for all the arms of the Roman legions.

John saw one of the heads of this beast, as if wounded to death. These seven heads are seven different

different forms of government in the city of Rome as their feat. Five of these were past before John's day, and the sixth, that of the emperors, was in existence when he saw the vision. This is the fact in history, and also the express declaration of this book, chap. xvii. 10. "and there are seven
 " kings, five are fallen, one is, and the other is not
 " yet come." The one head, therefore, which John saw wounded to death was that of the emperors. The imperial government was to receive a deadly wound before this beast should appear; and though the wounded head should die, yet the beast itself should not die, for the deadly wound in so far as it affected the beast should be healed. As the beast had lived when the other five heads had been cut off, it lived also after the sixth head had been wounded to death. It lived under the seventh head.

After this "deadly wound was healed, all the
 " world wondered after the beast." The word rendered *world* ought to have been translated *earth*. It is *γῆ* in the original, the proper signification of which is earth, and which is uniformly in this book translated the earth. The earth in this book is the symbol for the Roman empire. Not all the world, but all that part of it which was within the limits of the Roman empire at the time John saw this vision, was to wonder after, admire, and become subject to this last head of Roman government. Do not all these marks exactly fit Papal Rome?

Rome? Hath not the imperial government been dissolved? After the dissolution of this form of government, did not Rome for a considerable time cease to be the seat of empire, and to be ranked among the kingdoms of this world? Was not the proud city of Rome for a considerable time a small duchy, under the Exarchate of Ravenna? Did not the imperial government of Rome then receive a deadly wound? Did any person then living ever suppose, that Rome should again govern the world? But whilst the sixth, the wounded imperial head, died, did not the beast itself recover from the wound? The imperial government hath never yet been restored to Rome, but the Papal government was erected in it, in the year of Christ 756, and hath continued in it to this day, in the year 1790. Hath not all the ancient western Roman empire wondered after and become subject to the Papal government?

That the Papal as a civil government was not to arise until after the dissolution of the imperial government, was clearly predicted also by the apostle Paul, 2 Theff. ii. 3,—12. especially verses 6th, 7th, where he saith, “and now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time. “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; “only he who now letteth, (ὁ κατεχων, who withhold), will let, (that is, *withhold*), until he be “taken out of the way.” He who withheld in

the days of Paul was the imperial government. It was not possible in the nature of the thing, that the Papal government in its civil character could be erected in the city of Rome as its seat, until the imperial should be removed from that seat.

Verse 4th.—And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

All the Roman empire who wondered after the Papal hierarchy, should worship the dragon who gave power to the beast. All idolatry and superstition may be denominated the worshipping of devils, because they are not the worship of God, the sole object of all religious worship, and because they originally proceed from the devil, and prepare men for his service. In particular, certain doctrines long and publicly avowed by the church of Rome, because indeed they are of such a nature that they cannot be concealed, were predicted by the apostle Paul, and expressly called doctrines of devils.—Such for instance, as not keeping faith with heretics, equivocations, and mental reservations, the celibacy of the clergy, and the distinctions

tinctions and prohibitions of meats, 1 Tim. iv. 1, —3. “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in
 “the latter days some shall depart from the faith,
 “giving heed to seducing spirits, *and doctrines of*
 “*devils*; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their
 “consciences seared with a hot iron, forbidding to
 “marry, and commanding to abstain from meats
 “which God hath created to be received with
 “thanksgiving of them which believe and know
 “the truth.”

“They worship the beast also.”—Men do not pay religious worship to civil governors and governments. But he must be a stranger to the history of Papal Rome, who does not know that the votaries of Rome express their respect for the Pope and the Papal hierarchy, in a manner too like adoration and religious worship; they worship the beast in ascribing omnipotence to him.

They say, “Who is like him? who is so great
 “and powerful as he? Who can make war with
 “him? They impiously imagine, that the King of kings and Lord of lords cannot overthrow him. They worship the Papal hierarchy, by ascribing to it infallibility.

Verse 5th.—And there was given unto him
 a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies;

mies ; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

What power ever spake greater things or more blasphemous than Papal Rome hath done ?

“ And power was given unto him to continue “ forty and two months.” The words rendered “ to continue,” should have been translated *to make war*. In the original, they are *πολεμον ποιησαι*. By that God who governs the world, who protects his church and overrules her enemies, permission should be given to Papal Rome to make war against the saints of God for 42 prophetic months, that is 1260 prophetic days, which, as was formerly shewn, are 1243 solar years. As Papal Rome became a temporal kingdom in the year of Christ 756, 1243 years added to that year will run down to the year of Christ 1999, the time when Papal Rome and the Roman empire itself shall be for ever dissolved under this, its seventh and last head.

This period of time during which Papal Rome shall make war with the saints, is of the same length, and indeed begins and ends at the same periods, with the Gentiles treading the holy city under foot for forty-two months, chap. xi. 2. the prophesying of the two witnesses in sackcloth for 1260 days, verse 3, and the woman’s being in the wilderness for 1260 days, chap. xii. 6. and for a time and times and half a time, verse xiv. In the nature

ture of the thing, all these must be cotemporary : for the reign of Antichrist, and the sufferings and persecuted state of Christ's church, must be of the same continuance.

The character given of Papal Rome in this passage, and the time of his making war with the saints, are predicted of the last head of Roman government, in terms of the very same meaning, and almost of the same expression, by Daniel, chap. vii. 7, 8, 23,—25. Is it not wonderful? Is it not worthy of remark? Ought it not to strengthen our belief of this prediction, that amidst all the revolutions which have taken place in other kingdoms, Papal Rome hath continued for 1034 years speaking great things and blasphemies, and making war with the saints of God? Is not this a strong presumption that she will continue during the remaining 209 years of the predicted time?

In verse 23. Daniel says "the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be *divers from all kingdoms.*" Is not the Papal government different from all the kingdoms which ever were in the world? It is neither civil nor religious. It is a monstrous mixture of both. A most extraordinary and singular combination of civil and ecclesiastic government is the very constitution of the Papal hierarchy.

Verse

Verse 6th, And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

Another mark of this beast is, that he should open his mouth in blasphemy against God. This blasphemy is described very particularly. It is of three kinds, or rather immediately directed against three different objects, in all which it ultimately strikes against God. It is against the name of God, against the tabernacle of God, and against them who dwell in heaven.

By the name of God, is meant God himself in scripture. It is thus used in Exodus xx. 7. Psalms xxix. 2. xxxiv. 3. lxi. 5. and Matth. vi. 9. and many other passages of scripture.

In the symbolical language, the tabernacle of God signifies the church of Christ in this world, in its wilderness state as it is described by the woman in the wilderness for 1260 days, in the preceding chapter. The reason, why this period of the church of Christ from the year 756 to the year 1999, is represented by the tabernacle of God, is that the tabernacle, and not the temple, was the visible and stated place of public worship in the Jewish church, during their abode in, and travels through the wilderness of Arabia, which state of the Jews in the wilderness, was typical of this wilderness state

state of the Christian church. Upon the same principles of interpretation the opening of the temple is, in this book, the symbol for the triumphant, glorious, and established state of Christ's church in this world, which shall commence in the year of Christ 2000, which shall appear as we proceed.

By them who dwell in heaven, are meant the individual Christians, the real saints of God, in the church of Christ, during that period. For heaven, as was formerly shewn signifies in this book, the church of Christ, or kingdom of heaven in this world. The word which is translated *dwell* is *ἐκκηρύττας*, which signifies them who *tabernacle*. It is derived from the very word, which in the preceding verse is translated the *tabernacle*. Hence it is evident, that it signifies not the perpetual and eternal abode of the saints in heaven in a future state, but a short and unsettled habitation of Christians in the church of God in this world, similar to the nature of the temporary and unsettled habitation of men in tents. Hence too it is evident that it signifies those Christians, who live in that state of the church, which in the preceding clause is represented by the tabernacle; that is, those real Christians who live from the year 756 to the year 1999.

The best informed and most accurate historian could not have given a more distinct and precise account of the blasphemies of papal Rome, than that

that which the prophet delivered above 1600 years ago in the verse now under our view. Rome hath blasphemed God directly by arrogating to herself that infallibility, which is the prerogative of God only, by allowing and establishing image worship, by consecrating and worshiping the host, or bread in the sacrament of the supper.

This last instance of blasphemy directly against God cannot be better expressed than in the words of the council of Trent, sect. 13. chap. 5—" Nullus
 " itaque dubitandi locus reliquitur, quin omnes
 " Christi fideles, pro more in Catholica ecclesia sem-
 " per recepto, patriæ cultum qui vero Deo debetur
 " huic sanctissimo sacramento in veneratione exhi-
 " beant. Nam illum eundem Deum presentem in
 " eo adesse credimus, quem Pater eternus intro-
 " ducens in orbem terrarum, dicit, Et adorent eum
 " omnes angeli Dei." Which is thus expressed in the English language. " Therefore no place for
 " doubting is left, but that all the faithful, accord-
 " ing to the custom always received in the catholic
 " church, give that religious worship to this most ho-
 " ly sacrament, which is due to the true God.—
 " For we believe, that that very God is present in
 " it, whom when the eternal Father was introdu-
 " cing unto the world, he said And let all the angels
 " of God worship him." And as to the Christian church, and individual Christians, Rome uniformly blasphemes them by calling them heretics. Is

not

not this the uniform appellation, which she gives them? Upon the supposition that the Christian church is the church of God, and that real Christians are the true worshippers of God, is not this ultimately to blaspheme God himself?

Verses 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th.—And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them : and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity ; he that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

This beast was permitted to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. Papal Rome hath, for a long time, made war with the saints, in the violent and bloody persecutions, which she long carried on, and still carries on against them, so far as her power extends. Immediately before the time of the glorious Reformation in the sixteenth century, the saints appeared to be totally overcome by Papal

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persecution. This overcoming of the saints is the same with the killing of the two witnesses, chap. xi. 7, which hath been fully explained on that place. However much the western empire was divided into distinct and independent kingdoms and nations, at the time of the rise of the Papal hierarchy, and however different the languages were, which were spoken in these kingdoms, Papal Rome, long had the supreme authority over them, as predicted in verse 7. In all these kingdoms, the kings and their subjects were equally obedient to the nod of Rome.

All that dwell upon the earth, that is, all the inhabitants of the western empire, even when divided into the ten kingdoms, should worship the Beast and the Papal hierarchy, and obey it from a principle of superstition, with the single exception of men of one particular character. For they, whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, though living within the boundaries of the Roman empire, should not worship nor serve the Papal hierarchy.

These persons, who shall not worship the Beast, are all those individual persons scattered through the whole empire, during the whole wilderness state of the church, who are spiritually alive in Christ Jesus; who are renewed by the spirit of God in the spirit of their minds; who walk not after the flesh,

flesh, but after the spirit ; who, though they may not be all known or acknowledged by men to be true Christians, are all perfectly known, and shall at last be as certainly acknowledged by Christ, as they could have been, had all their names been written in a book kept by him, as a register of all those who being born again, are alive in Christ Jesus. These are all real Christians, and these are the only persons, who, during the whole of that period, shall never submit to Papal superstition.

The ninth verse is a solemn call to all men to attend to, and keep in remembrance, the predictions contained in the following verse. The meaning of which is, that however great and powerful Papal Rome shall be ; however much her domination shall extend over kindreds, tongues and nations ; however much the inhabitants of the empire shall worship her ; however many of the saints she shall put to death, or oblige to fly unto banishment ; and however much she shall for a time appear to have overcome the saints of God ; she herself shall afterwards be led into captivity, she herself shall be killed with the sword and totally overthrown. This prediction refers, in the first place, to the various judgements, particularly of captivity, and bloody destructions in wars, which have been fulfilled already on the votaries of Papal Rome ; as more particularly predicted under vials, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, in chap. xvi. 2.—11. which shall

be fully explained in the commentary on these verses. And in the second place, to those terrible, destructive, and bloody wars, by which the Papal hierarchy and empire shall be totally overthrown at last, in the year 1999, which are particularly predicted in chap. xiv. 20. chap. xvii. 16. 17. and chap. xix. 19.—21. which shall be explained fully on these passages.

“ Here is the patience and the faith of the “ saints.” All the saints of God believe the prediction of the final overthrow of Papal Rome. Whilst some men treat these predictions with neglect or contempt, and while others regard the church of Rome as the true church of God, every real saint of God believes that the Papal hierarchy shall be finally overthrown, according to the predictions of sacred scripture. Here too is the patience of the saints. The saints only are possessed of that patience, which shall qualify them for enduring, without apostatizing from the faith, all those persecutions to which they shall be exposed, from Papal Rome. This period of the power of Papal Rome, is the one in which the faith and patience of the saints shall be chiefly exercised and confirmed. In the succeeding period of the church, in which the kingdom of God shall be triumphant in the world, neither their faith nor their patience shall be so much put to the trial.

In chap. xiv. 12. The same thing is said of the
patience

patience and faith of the saints. In that passage, as connected with the final overthrow of Rome, it signifies the proof or evidence that their faith and patience have been built on solid grounds, since what they believed is then in fact come to pass; and since they are then, in fact, delivered from those trials, and put in possession of those blessings, the termination of the one, and the commencement of the other, which were the grounds of their patience.

Verse 11th.—And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

John, having seen the beast with seven heads and ten horns, mentioned in verse 1, rise out of the sea, before he left his station on the sand of the sea, saw, on the other hand of him, another beast coming up out of the earth. The first of these was the temporal government of Rome under its last form, which rose after the empire had been dissolved by the Goths and other northern barbarous nations. This second beast rose out of the earth, that is, out of the Roman empire, when it was again brought to a settled constitution and state under the last form of government. It was also (*θηρίον*) a beast of prey, and therefore a civil government. Like the first
beast

beast it is also monstrous, for it is like a lamb, and yet speaks like a dragon.

It has two horns, and only two. By the two horns it is intimated, that this government is vested with two kinds of power. As a lamb it is partly ecclesiastic, pretending a relation to Christ, who is represented frequently in this book, and in other parts of sacred scripture, by a lamb; and as a dragon it is partly civil, and in reality more nearly related to the devil than to Christ. The whole hieroglyphic taken together signifies, that soon after the Roman empire should be established or settled under the seventh or last form of government, another power should rise up within the empire, and subservient to it, partly ecclesiastic, and partly civil: That this power should put on the appearance of an ecclesiastic; for though it should have two horns, they should not be horns of a lamb, but like the horns of a lamb: But that, in reality, it should have much of the nature of the dragon in it, for it spake as a dragon. Like the dragon it had Rome for its seat; like the dragon it should throw floods of error out of its mouth; like the dragon it should be wroth with the woman, and should make war with the remnant of her seed; like the dragon it should imagine that the first beast derived its power and authority from it. It hath no crowns upon its horns, nor upon that head which spake like a dragon, to shew us, that this power though both ecclesiastical

ecclesiastical and civil, and though its seat of government should be the city of Rome, should not be a crowned head.

The first beast which rose out of the sea signifies the constitution of the Roman government under its last or seventh form. And this second beast signifies the Pope individually, who soon after the constitution of Papal Rome was fully settled and confirmed, assumed a despotic power to himself; and, notwithstanding the constitution of the Papal government, acted as an absolute despot, as if there had been no law nor counsel in the empire but his own will. For a considerable time after the grant of Pepin, in the year 756, the Pope acted as the bishop of Rome, and the chief magistrate of the Roman state. He never attempted to assume a despotic power to himself, either in ecclesiastic or civil matters. But in the end of that century and the beginning of the next he assumed a despotic power in both; and from that time the government of Rome was the most singular and extraordinary that ever appeared in the world. At the same time, over the same extent of territory, and in the same seat of government, the constitution of Rome was a mixed government of the monarchical and aristocratical kinds, and the Pope himself was vested with a power absolutely despotic; and yet these two opposite kinds of government mutually supported and strengthened each other.

As

As this second beast had no crowns upon it, the Pope does not wear a crown like other kings. All historians are agreed, that it was in the end of the eight century, and in the ninth one, that the Roman pontiffs assumed that despotic power which they have long held. The reader will be fully satisfied of this by looking unto the writers on these centuries of the church, particularly Mosheim.

That this second beast signifies the Pope individually acting with despotic authority, will I hope clearly appear from the character which is drawn of this beast in the six following verses.

Verses 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th.
—And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life un-
to

to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

This second beast exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, or as the word *ἐξουσίαν* signifies, in his presence. They should be cotemporary powers, and both in the Roman empire. All the power of the first beast is both a civil and ecclesiastic power, and both these the Pope individually exerciseth during the existence of the last form of government. By the exertions of his civil and ecclesiastic powers, the Pope hath made the Roman empire and all its citizens not only to submit to, but almost to adore the Roman hierarchy.

The Pope hath wrought many false miracles, with the same intention of proving himself to be the servant of God, and the system of worship which he teaches, the true worship of God, with which the prophet Elijah in a miraculous manner brought down fire from heaven, as recorded in

Kings xviii. 37, 38. and 2 Kings i. 10,—12. These false miracles he works in the sight of *men* not of *saints*. He does not perform them in the presence of the true worshippers of God, lest examining them with impartiality and attention they should discover and publish the tricks by which these false miracles are wrought. But he performs them in presence of the votaries of Rome, who, on account of their prejudices and ignorance are easily deceived by these false miracles which they wish to be true.

By these false miracles, “they who dwell on “the earth,” the inhabitants of the Roman empire are deceived and led into gross errors.

By the power and influence of the Pope the inhabitants of the Roman empire were persuaded to make an image to the beast, which had the wound with the sword and did live. It was the imperial head of Roman government which was the head of the beast, that had the wound, as was shewn on verse 3d. Hence, when it is said that the Pope persuaded them to make an image to the beast which had the wound, the meaning of it is, that through the influence of the Popes, the Papal hierarchy, both in its civil government and in its ceremonies of religious worship, was in a great measure modelled upon those which were established under the Heathen emperors. That this is in fact the case with the constitution of the Papal government, must be evident to every candid and intelligent

gent person who compares the imperial with the Papal constitution of Rome, and the Heathen rites of worship in use in Rome during the times of the emperors, with very many of the ceremonies of worship in the church of Rome under the Popes. On account of this resemblance of Heathen Rome, Papal Rome is called the *Gentiles* in chap. xi. 2.

This image of imperial Rome was not to be a dead one. Life should be given to it. It should be as really alive as the beast had been whose image it is. Papal Rome in a great part of its constitution civil and religious, should be modelled upon imperial Rome; and though ostensibly a religious government, it should as certainly be possessed of civil and political life or power as imperial Rome had been.

This life it should express by speaking, and by causing those to be killed who would not act as the devoted servants of Papal Rome. By speaking great things and killing the saints, Papal Rome is characterised in verses 5th and 7th of this chapter. Accordingly, in fact the Papal hierarchy hath been as real, active and powerful a civil government as that of imperial Rome ever was. It hath been particularly marked by speaking great things, by its bulls, anathemas, and excommunications. By these it hath often produced greater effects than imperial Rome could do by large armies. It was not for nothing that in this passage, in verse 5th of

this chapter, and in Daniel chap. vii. 8, and 25, Papal Rome is characterised by a “mouth speaking great things.”

Another feature in the character of Papal Rome is, “that it causeth that as many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed.” Rome hath long been distinguished, by persecuting to death, those who refuse to become her votaries. The fact is so well known, that it would be an insult offered to the understandings of the reader, to produce particular instances from history; of those vast multitudes of persons, whom she styling heretics, because they would not become her devoted servants, hath put to death by fire and sword. The church of Rome indeed says that she puts none to death, that she only delivers over obstinate condemned heretics to the civil magistrate, and he puts them to condign deaths. This distinction will be of no avail to them, in order to evade the force of the prediction of the spirit of God, in this and other passages in this book. For it is not said, that the ecclesiastic power of Rome, as distinguished from the civil power, kills them who worship not the image of the beast: But it is the image of the beast, it is the beast itself under the seventh head which causeth them to be killed. But the beast signifies the whole Papal constitution civil and ecclesiastic combined together, but still in such a manner as to render the
form

form of government a temporal one, (a beast of prey). And therefore, if they are put to death either by the civil or the ecclesiastic rulers under that hierarchy, they are killed by the beast, or the image of the beast, as predicted; and still more so, when, as is the fact, both the ecclesiastic and the civil powers unite to “cause them to be killed.” The former finds them obstinate heretics, excommunicates, and delivers them over to the civil magistrate, and the latter puts them to death, lest he himself, should be treated as a heretic or favourer of heretics. This prediction is expressed in such language as to give the most direct and full answer to this evasion, and to express the part, which both the powers in the Papal constitution act in killing those, who refuse to become the devoted servants of Rome.

In verse 15th, it is said, “that the image of the “beast should both speak, and *cause* that as many “as would not worship the image of the beast, “should be killed.” Scarcely could any other words have expressed so exactly, the part, which each of these powers act in this matter, as the words *cause them to be killed*. The ecclesiastic powers do not condemn to death, by their own sentences, nor kill, with their own hands, obstinate heretics; but do not they *cause them to be killed*, when they excommunicate them, and deliver them over to the civil magistrate for that ve-

ry purpose? And does not the civil magistrate cause them to be killed, when he passes sentence of death upon them, and delivers them into the hands of the executioner? The one is the more remote, and the other the more immediate cause of their death. The two together form the complete cause of it.

The image of the beast, that is, the Papal hierarchy, should cause all persons of every rank and of all circumstances, to receive a mark by which they should be known to be the slaves of Rome, and should hinder all, who do not receive such a mark from carrying on any civil employment within the empire. These marks are symbols borrowed from the custom of imprinting a mark and a number upon some part of the body of slaves and cattle, to ascertain that they are the property of that person, whose mark and number they bear. With respect to these marks, Papal Rome was not to act like other persons or communities who imprint a mark upon their slaves and cattle. The same person imprints not only the same mark upon all his slaves and cattle, but also on the same part of their body ; and he imprints his mark always along with his number. But some of the slaves of Papal Rome were to have the mark on their right hand, some on their forehead, some were to have the mark, some the name of the beast, and some the number of his name. We
are

are not to imagine that any external mark was to be impressed on any part of the bodies of the votaries of Rome: But only that they should be known to be the subjects of Rome, by certain traits in their character, properly expressed in the symbolical language by a mark in their right hand, in their forehead, by the name of the beast, and by the number of his name. Those with the mark in the right hand are those persons, who though they do not openly profess themselves the votaries of Rome, are dexterous and active in promoting the interests of the hierarchy. Those with the mark in the forehead, are they who openly profess themselves to be the votaries of Rome, whether they are skillful and active or, not in promoting her interest; those with the name of the beast, are those who after his name are called Roman Catholics; and those with the number of his name, are the great number of religious orders, who however widely, in doctrine and rules of discipline, they differ from one another, and even from the peculiar doctrines of the church of Rome, acknowledge the Papal hierarchy, and rank themselves among the number of its votaries. These last are properly distinguished by the number of his name. Whoever reads with impartiality and attention the history of the different religious orders which arose in such numbers in the church of Rome must clearly see, that the doctrines and rules

of

of discipline of many of them were not only different from, but in many things opposite to, those of the church of Rome, that they were not called after the name of the beast, but after the name of their particular founder; such for instance, as the Franciscans, the Dominicans, and such others: Their chief connection with the hierarchy is, that they rank themselves as its subjects, under the Pope as their head, and apparently increase the number of those who respect his name. Every person acquainted with the history of Papal Rome knows, that every one who did not come under one or other of these four denominations was stiled a heretic, was prohibited from buying or selling, and was excluded from all civil commerce within the bounds of the empire.

To produce bulls of the Popes, or examples to this purpose in proof of the fact, would be endless, they are so many, and superfluous; the fact is so well known, I shall therefore produce only the bull of Pope Martin V. as an example of the exclusion from civil rights and privileges now mentioned. (Fox's Acts and Monuments, vol. i. page 738. also in *sine consilio Constantiensis*.) “We will
“and command, that by this our authority apostolical, ye exhort and admonish all the professors
“of the Catholic faith, as emperors, kings, dukes,
“princes, &c. that they expel out of their kingdoms, provinces, cities, towns &c. all and all
“manner

“ manner of heretics, according to the effect and
 “ tenor of the council of Lateran.—That they
 “ suffer none such within their shires or circuits to
 “ preach, or to keep either house or family, either
 “ yet to use any handycraft or occupation or other
 “ trades or merchandise, or else to solace themselves
 “ any ways, or to frequent the company of Chris-
 “ tian men. And furthermore, if such public
 “ and known heretics shall chance to die, (al-
 “ though not so denounced by the church), yet in
 “ this so great a crime, let him and them want
 “ Christian burial.—The residue let the foresaid
 “ temporal lords, &c. take amongst them, with
 “ condign deaths without any delay to punish.”
 Thus Pope Martin V. hath written a most exact
 and full commentary on verses 16th and 17th.

Not only is this prediction most minutely fulfilled in the history of Papal Rome, in these four marks by which her votaries are known, which four are peculiar to that hierarchy, but by receiving persons of all these four denominations into her communion, the worldly wisdom of Rome is highly distinguished. This is one of the chief engines by which her power hath been increased so much and preserved so long. Men who had her mark in their right hand, men of any or of no religion, if skilful and active in promoting her interests, she regarded as her votaries. In these men she had many artful, diligent, and powerful supporters.

Among the order of Jesuits how many such men were there? Men who had her mark in their forehead, men who avowedly professed her religion, though they had neither the address nor the power to promote her interest by their active exertions, she received into her communion; as also those who bearing her name were called Roman Catholics; because she knew that the world is more governed by opinion than by real power, and that with the men of the world nothing has a greater tendency to make many new profelytes to a church than a great shew of old votaries. But her receiving the last of these into her communion, those who had only the number of her name, the different religious orders, is a master-piece of worldly policy, and peculiar to Rome of all the churches that ever appeared in the world. Every one acquainted with church-history must have seen, that the different religious orders are just so many religious sects, which in process of time, and in the ordinary course of things, have arisen in the church of Rome. Every one of these, like all sects in every church, held certain tenets in common with the church in which they sprung up, whilst they had some peculiar ones, on account of which they separated from it.

The power of all other churches hath always diminished in proportion to the number of sects which have sprung up in them, because these sects

no sooner arose than they separated from the communion of the mother church, and carried off numbers of her votaries. But Rome, with a policy peculiar to herself, most artfully kept these new sects or religious orders in her communion, whatever their peculiar tenets were, and even when some of them bore the bitterest enmity against, and were at open war with, one another. Thus, the more sects sprung up in her, the stronger she grew; because their number represented to the world the number of her votaries as daily increasing. Their number increased the number of her name, and by her name more than by her real power she long governed the world.

Verse 18th.—Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six.

The expression “here is wisdom,” is always used in this book to intimate to us, that what immediately follows is a key to the preceding prophecies, and therefore is explanatory of the symbolical predictions; the language in it is to be taken in its plain and natural meaning, just as it is ordinarily used by men. This expression is also used

in chap. xvii. 9. "Here is the mind which hath wisdom;" and all the following nine verses to the end of the chapter contain a very plain and exact key to the preceding prophecies, as shall be shewn in the commentary upon them. The language in all these keys is not symbolical or prophetic, but is all used in the common acceptation of the words. This is necessary; for otherwise it could not be explanatory of prophetic language. We find such keys in the prophecies of Ezekiel, Daniel, Jeremiah, and others. Such keys are a part of the idiom of prophetic language, and in them the words are always used in their ordinary acceptation. It is with peculiar propriety that these keys to prophetic writings are introduced with this proclamation, "Here is wisdom"; for wisdom consists in perceiving clearly, and using in a right manner, the best means for attaining the ends of which we are in pursuit. The end which we pursue in studying prophecies, is to discover their meaning. But the best means for enabling us to discover their meaning, must be those particular keys, which the same Spirit of God who dictated these prophecies hath placed among them for that very purpose. As much wisdom is displayed in forming the key, so some wisdom is necessary to understand its construction, and to use it so as to unlock the prophecy,

It is not the number of *the name* of the beast :
But it is the number of the beast, that we are to
find

find out by this key. That is, it is by the proper application of a given number, that we are to find out the year, in which the beast predicted in this chapter, particularly in the first verse of it, should arise. It is to find out the year, in which the Papal, or last head of Roman government should arise, by being vested with a temporal dominion. This given number is six hundred and sixty six.

We are told that this is the number of a man. It is not the number of a prophet. It is not, therefore, to be used, as prophetic numbers are, to signify some other period of time, than that which is actually expressed, as the prophetic numbers, in chapters xi. and xii. were used. But it is to be taken just as these numbers, 666, are used by men in the common acceptance of them. A man's pen, in Isaiah viii. 1. signifies such a pen as men write with. The measure of a man, in Rev. xxii. 17. is that measure, with which men measure, particularly, as is evident from the context, the cubit, with which they measure. The number of a man, is the very same phraseology to signify a number taken in the same acceptance, in which men ordinarily use it.

Though this number had not been expressly defined the number of a man, to distinguish it from a prophetic number; as being a part of a key or explanatory passage, it ought to have been taken in the ordinary acceptance of the numbers. It
must

must therefore signify 666 years, which when reduced to solar years, are 657 years. But unless we know when these years commence, we cannot know when they shall terminate, nor the time when the beast shall rise, which shall happen at the time of their termination. In all prophetic writings, the commencements of the predicted periods are all either expressly fixed to a particular time, or no time at all is mentioned for their commencement. Thus the commencement of Daniel's seventy weeks, in Dan. ix. 24, 27. was fixed "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem." The time and times and half a time, during which the woman is to be in the wilderness, Rev. xii. 14, commences with her flight unto the wilderness. The 42 months continuance of the beast, Rev. xiii. 5. commences with his becoming a beast, that is a temporal government. When no time is mentioned for their commencement, the time, which common sense dictates, is the right time, that is, the time when the vision was actually made to the prophet. If any person says, that a certain event shall take place at the distance of 20 years, without naming any particular time for the commencement of these 20 years, there is not the least doubt that he meant that they commenced at the very time he spoke.

The passage now under our view is one of those in
which

which no time is expressly fixed for the commencement of the 666 years. The time of its commencement must, therefore, be the time when John saw the vision of the beast to whom this number refers. Among chronologists, there are some small variations with respect to antient dates, which, indeed, is not surprising, when every circumstance is candidly considered. But, from the best evidence that can be obtained, the vision contained in this chapter, and all the visions contained in this book, were made to the apostle John, in the island of Patmos, in the year 95 of the vulgar Christian æra. In chap. i. 9. John tells us that he was banished to the isle of Patmos, for his adherence to the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus, at the time the visions contained in this book were made to him. This fact is confirmed by authentic history. All the church historians agree that John was banished to Patmos, by the Roman emperor Domitian, in the persecution which he raised against Christians. This persecution began in the end of the year 93, or in the beginning of the 94. It was very violent; but of short duration.

Of this persecution, of the time of it, and of the banishment of the apostle John to Patmos under it by Domitian, Mosheim thus writes: *Hist. Cent. i. Vol. i. page 35.* “ Though immediately
“ after the death of Nero, the rage of this first
“ persecution

“persecution against the Christians ceased, yet
“the flame broke out anew in the year 93 or 94
“under Domitian, a prince little inferior to Nero
“in all sorts of wickedness. The persecution re-
“newed by this unworthy prince was extremely
“violent, though his untimely death put a stop to
“it not long after it commenced. Flavius Clemens,
“a man of consular dignity, and Flavia Domitilla
“his niece, or, as some say, his wife, were the prin-
“cipal martyrs that suffered in this persecution,
“in which also the *apostle John* was banished to
“the isle of Patmos.”

It is well known, by all acquainted with chronology, that the vulgar Christian æra did not commence at the time of the birth of Christ; but at the fourth year after his birth. It commenced in the year of the world 4004; but Christ was born in the year of the world 4000, as is agreed upon by the most accurate chronologists, and as shall be shewn, as we proceed in this book, by certain general leading fixed principles of chronology established in sacred scripture. Hence, to find the true year of Christ, in which this vision was made to John, we must add four years to the vulgar year of the vision, which will bring it to the year 99, as the true year of Christ, in which John saw this vision. Though chronologists had erred four years, in their calculations, it would be impious to suppose, that the unerring spirit of God would refer to

a wrong year, in this key. To the year of Christ 99 we must, therefore, add 657 years, which will bring us down to the year of Christ 756, as the year in which the beast with the seven heads and ten horns described in verses 1, 2, and 3, should arise; or, in plain language, when the Pope, the last head of Roman government, should become a temporal prince, and have the city of Rome for the seat of his government.

By this method of calculation, upon the most just principles of chronology and prophecy, the exact time of the commencement of the temporal power of the Pope, might have been discovered long before it happened, as it was thus predicted, by John, 657 years before the event. The justness of this mode of calculation might be established at great length: But to us, who live in this age of the world, this is unnecessary; for the year 756, is now past 1034 years ago. If we look into the history of the year 756, we shall find that, in that very year, the Pope of Rome was vested with temporal possessions, and a temporal dominion; that the city of Rome was the seat of his government, and that this seventh head of Roman government hath held that temporal dominion in this seat to this day. All historians so exactly agree that it was in the year 756, that Pepin King of France vested Pope Stephen, II, with the temporal dominion of Rome and of the other cities

included in his grant, and this was an event of so public a nature, that particular proofs of it are quite unnecessary.

For the information of those of my readers, who are least acquainted with history, I shall refer them to Mezeray's history of France, vol. 1. page 216, or to John Bulteel's translation, at the year 756, and shall transcribe one passage from Mosheim's church history, and one from Sigonius *his. de regno Italiæ*.

Mosheim Cent. viii. vol. i. page 353. " The terrified pontiff Stephen II. addresses himself to his powerful patron and protector Pepin, represents to him his deplorable condition, and implores his assistance; the French Monarch embarks with zeal, in the cause of the suppliant pontiff, crosses the Alps, A. D. 754 with a numerous army; and having defeated Aistulphus, (Aistulphus was king of the Lombards), obliged him, by a solemn treaty, to deliver up to the see of Rome, the Exarchate of Ravenna, Pentapolis, and all the cities, castles and territories, which he had seized in the Roman dukedom. It was not, however, long before the Lombard prince violated, without remorse, an engagement, which he had entered into with reluctance. In the year 755 he laid siege to Rome for the second time, but was again obliged to sue for peace, by the victorious arms of Pepin, who returned in-

" to

“ to Italy, and, forcing the Lombard to execute
 “ the treaty he had so audaciously violated, made
 “ a new grant of the Exarchate and of Pentapolis to
 “ the Roman pontiff and his successors in the apos-
 “ tolic see of St Peter. And thus was the bishop
 “ of Rome raised to the rank of a *temporal prince*.”

Mosheim thus tells us, that it was in the year 755, that the king of the Lombards laid siege to Rome, which Pepin obliged him to raise before he gave the grant of their temporal dominions to Pope Stephen II, and his successors. He is not minute enough in his narrative, to tell us in what time of the year the siege was laid, nor when it was raised. But Sigonius a civil historian of high character and a Roman Catholic, informs us, that this siege was laid in the end of autumn 755, that Pepin did not leave France until the end of that autumn, and that it was in the following year 756, that he gave the grant of their temporal dominions to the Roman pontiffs. Every year is marked on the margin of Sigonius's history opposite to the transactions of the year, so that, at one glance, the reader sees in what year the events happened, which he narrates.

In *Hist. de regno Italiæ, lib. 3.* page 79. opposite to the year 755, in the margin, he writes thus.
 “ Jam autumnus per nonam indictionem, magna
 “ ex parte processerat; cum Pipinus paratum ex-
 “ ercitum ducere ad saltus Alpium cœpit.” Which

is thus expressed in the English language. “ Now
 “ the autumn had, in a great part passed through
 “ the ninth indiction, when Pepin began to lead
 “ the army which he had mustered, to the passes
 “ of the Alps.”

In the following page opposite to the year 756,
 on the margin, he writes thus. “ Interim Aistul-
 “ phus per aliquot dies, diligenter obsessus extré-
 “ mum expugnationis, atque excidii periculum ti-
 “ mens, legatos cum liberis mandatis ad Pipinum
 “ de compositione misit. Qui in colloquium pro-
 “ gressi Aistulfum pacem petere dixerunt, eam-
 “ que non Exarchatu solum, et Pentapoli restitu-
 “ enda, sed Camactico etiam adjungendo præsto
 “ esse redimere, addiderunt; conditione a Pipino ac-
 “ cepta inde fœdus scriptum, atque jurejurando,
 “ obsidibusque firmatum. Quibus rebus perfectis,
 “ Pipinus Exarchatum, Pentapolimque iterum St.
 “ Petro, et successoribus ejus in perpetuum possi-
 “ denda concessit, atque ita scribam referre ipsas
 “ donationes in tabulas jussit. Neque ita multo post
 “ Fulrado abate, qui ab Aistulfo singula acciperet,
 “ et pontifici assignaret, relicto, ipse Franciam
 “ repetivit. Fulradus cum procuratoribus Aistul-
 “ fi in Exarchatum, Pentapolim progressus omnes
 “ urbes præter Ferrariam, Faventiam, et Cabal-
 “ lum recepit, et obsidibus de unaquaque sumptis,
 “ ac primoribus secum earum ductis, Roman adiit,
 “ atque

“ atque singulatum urbium claves una cum tabulis
“ ipsis donationis in confessione St Petri deposuit.”

This passage may be thus expressed in the English language : “ In the mean time, Aistulfus having been closely besieged for some days ; and “ fearing the extreme danger of an assault and of “ being totally cut off, sent ambassadors to Pepin, “ with ample powers, to treat of a capitulation. “ Who having entered upon a conference, said “ that Aistulfus desired a peace, and added, that “ he is ready to purchase it, not only by restoring “ the Exarchate and Pentapolis ; but also by adding to them Comachio. Pepin having accepted the condition, an agreement was instantly “ written and confirmed by an oath and hostages. “ When these things were finished, Pepin gave a “ new grant of the Exarchate and Pentapolis to “ St Peter and his successors to be possessed by “ them for ever, and commanded a writer to extend these grants in writing, in the above terms. “ Very soon after he returned to France, having “ left the abbot Fulradus, who should receive every one of these towns from Aistulfus, and dispose them to the pontiff. Fulradus having “ gone unto the Exarchate and Pentapolis with “ the procurators of Aistulfus, received all the cities excepting Ferraria, Faventia, and Caballum, “ and having taken hostages from every one of “ them, and having led, along with him, the
“ chief

“ chief men of them, went to Rome and deposited
“ the keys of every one of these cities, together with
“ the title-deeds themselves of the grant, on the
“ altar of St Peter.

In the year 755, Pepin made a peace with Aistulphus king of the Lombards, upon his engaging to give up to the Pope the Exarchate of Ravenna and Pentapolis. Though Aistulphus confirmed his engagement by a most solemn oath, and by delivering to Pepin forty hostages for his performance of it, whom he carried with him to France, yet when he returned to France Aistulphus not only refused to vest the Pope with his temporal dominions, but again attacked Rome in the following year. Thus by refusing to perform his engagement, the time when the Pope was first raised to the rank of a temporal prince, was brought down to the year 756, the precise time predicted in this verse. And the king of the Lombards, without knowing or intending it, was the blind instrument, in the hand of God of measuring out the 657 years of this prophecy; for if he had performed his engagement to Pepin, the Pope would have been a temporal prince in the year 755, one year too early for this prediction. For these facts the reader is desired to consult Sigonius, *de regno Italiae*, lib. iii. page 79.

Having thus, both from the prophetic prediction and from the historical account of the event ascer-
tained

tained, that the year of Christ 756 was the very year in which the Papal government became a civil one, or in the symbolical language, a beast, it will now be easy to know with equal certainty, in what year the Papal government shall be finally dissolved. In verse 5th, this government was to continue 42 months. In Daniel vii. 25, 26. it is thus predicted of the last head of Roman government. "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change times and laws; and they shall be given unto his hand, until a *time and times and the dividing of time*. But the judgement shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." All these sufferings of the Christian church which in this prophecy are declared to be cotemporary with the Papal reign, and which in the nature of the thing must be so, are represented as continuing for the exact same space of time for which he is said to continue in verse 5th. Thus in ch. xi. 2. the Gentiles are to tread the holy city under foot 42 months; in v. 3d, the two witnesses are to prophecy 1260 days clothed in sackcloth; in ch. xii. 6. the woman hath a place prepared for her in the wilderness for 1260 days; and in v. 14th, she is to be nourished there for a time and times and half a time. Every one of these prophetic expressions of time signifies the exact same number

ber of years, even 1243 solar years, as has been shewn already. If then to the year 756 we add 1243, we shall find the year 1999 to be the year in which the Papal hierarchy shall be totally and finally dissolved.

This calculation will be further confirmed, if more confirmation is necessary, when in its proper place we come to fix the commencement of the millennium; which, upon very striking principles, shall be fixed to the beginning of the year of Christ 2000. But in the nature of the thing, that æra of purity, peace, and prosperity to the church of Christ cannot commence until Antichrist be overthrown.

That this calculation is just, we have very strong reason to believe, from what hath already in fact happened relative to the Papal government. Though this prediction was written by John 657 years before the Papal government became a civil one, it became one in the year 756, the very year which John predicted. Since that time, it hath continued the same form of government, the same civil constitution, and in the same seat of government for 1034 years. There is not another civil government in Europe whose constitution hath not been changed during that period. When it arose at the predicted time, when it hath continued so long, when it is the only one in Europe which hath continued so long, are not all these together
very

very strong presumptions that it shall continue for the remaining 209 years of the predicted period. Since the Reformation, above 220 years ago, though the Papal constitution continues still the same, and though the city of Rome still continues the seat of government, the extent of the Papal dominions, and the authority and power of the Pope and of the Papal hierarchy have been greatly contracted. Since that time they have been diminishing, they are still diminishing with an accelerated motion: is it not therefore highly probable that they will go on diminishing until they shall be totally dissolved? All civil governments, like men, have their infancy, their progress, their prime, their decline, and their dissolution. Can there be any reason to conclude, that after it has been on the decline for above 220 years, the Papal shall be the only civil government in the world which shall renew its age and its vigour? But if it shall go on in its decline with an accelerated motion, as all other empires have done whenever they had passed their prime, and as itself hath done for the last 220 years, it must be totally dissolved in the remaining 209 years of the predicted period.

Before leaving this chapter, I shall make three general observations, which I trust will be followed out at greater length by the candid and intelligent reader.

1st, All the symbolical terms used in this chapter have been explained in the common acceptance of the same symbolical terms, wherever they have occurred in any other part of this book, or in any other prophetic writings. Hence, it is evident that no false interpretation hath been forced upon them to serve a particular hypothesis.

2^d, That the beast with the seven heads and ten horns described in this chapter, signifies the Papal government, with the city of Rome for its seat, after it became a civil as well as an ecclesiastical one, is evident from this circumstance, that in this chapter that government is represented not by one symbol, but by a great many distinct and separate ones, and every one of them exactly agrees to the particular feature in the Papal government to which it refers. One symbol might by accident agree to one particular feature in that government, but it is beyond all the calculations of chances that, of so great a number of symbols, every one should exactly agree to its respective feature in the Papal government; unless the whole picture had been intended to represent that government. The hieroglyphic in this chapter is a full picture of a particular civil government. Like every picture, it shews the particular government of which it is the picture, by exhibiting all its features in their proper places and proportions. If I go into a gallery hung with a number of well drawn pictures, and see one which
hath

hath the nose or the eyes of a gentleman who is a particular acquaintance of mine, at first glance I conclude, that this is his picture : but, on examining it more narrowly, I cannot find another feature in it which corresponds to my friend's face, and therefore am quite certain that it is not his picture, but that it was drawn for some person who resembles him in his nose or eyes, but in no other part of his face. As I walk along the gallery, my eyes are attracted by another picture which much resembles my friend's face, I examine it with attention, and find that not only the general complexion and shape of the face resemble his, but that every particular feature, however minute, exactly agrees to the correspondent feature in his face. I am then more certain that he is the person for whom this picture was drawn, than I could have been that another one was his picture which had his name written on the bottom of it. In the last case, the name might have been affixed to a wrong picture by mistake, it might be the picture of another person whose name was the same with my friend's, or of one to whom my friend's name was humourously given. But when, in its complexion and in all its features the picture exactly corresponded to my friend's face, none of these circumstances could attend it, nor any other which could raise a doubt in the mind of an intelligent, candid, and attentive person, that it was the pic-

ture of the person whom it so exactly resembled. Perfectly similar is the case with the picture of Papal Rome, which is drawn in this chapter. It is capable of conveying to the intelligent, candid, and attentive mind, more certainty that it is Papal Rome which is represented by it, than the name of *Rome* itself written in the plainest characters could have done. If the name of Rome had been used in place of this picture, some might have said that it was Heathen not Papal Rome which was meant; others, that Rome was not to be taken for Rome itself, but like the names of Egypt and Babylon, for some idolatrous and persecuting power which was to arise. But when a picture is drawn at full length, in which all the features exactly agree to Papal Rome, and to no other kingdom that ever hath been on the face of the earth, what unprejudiced man can doubt that by it Papal Rome is represented?

And 3d, That as this picture was drawn by John 657 years before Papal Rome became a civil government, that is, before Rome was in fact possessed of any of these features which are drawn so minutely in this picture; that as these at the predicted time appeared in the character of Papal Rome, so exactly correspondent to this picture, that if a limner should have drawn a picture of Papal Rome from the life, he could not possibly have drawn a more just or striking one than that which
is

is exhibited in this chapter ; we may hence see a clear proof that this book was written by the inspiration of that God to whom all things past, present, and future, are ever present. We may also hence see a striking proof of the superintendency of divine providence in the moral government of the world, in the strictest consistency with the moral agency of men.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIV.

VISION VIII.

Verses 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th.

AND I looked, and lo a lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder : and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps : and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders : and no man could learn that song, but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth. These are they who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins : these are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth ;

eth ; these were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile : for they are without fault before the throne of God.

This chapter, according to the general construction of this book, is a general introduction to the following prophetic visions in it, relative to the final overthrow of Antichrist, to the bringing in of the Jews with the fullness of the Gentiles, and to the commencement, duration, and nature of the millennium. As it is an introduction, the things contained in it are expressed in short and general terms ; they are treated more fully in the following parts of this book. The comment on this introductory chapter shall be general and short like itself, and the short hints contained in it shall be more fully explained when I shall consider those parts of this book to which this chapter is introductory.

The Lamb signifies Christ ; and mount Sion the settled and triumphant state of Christ's church after the travels, toils, and persecutions of her wilderness state. The 144,000 with his Father's name on their foreheads, are the true and sealed servants of God, as mentioned in chap. vii. 3, 4. This number is made up of 12, the number of the patriarchs,

ariarchs, multiplied into 12 the number of the apostles, which makes 144, and this multiplied by 1000, the years of the millennium, which makes the exact number of 144,000. This number is the hieroglyphic fixed on in chap. vii. to signify the true servants of God, during the whole persecuted period of Christ's church, until that period shall end with the downfall of Antichrist and the commencement of the millennium. It does not mean, that the number of the servants of God during the whole or any part of that period shall be exactly 144,000, nor that their number shall be uniformly the same, nor that the same individual persons shall live during the whole period. But it means, that in every part of that period, however trying it may be, there shall be some whose religion is drawn from and modelled upon the scriptures of the Old and New Testament; who name the name of Christ, and depart from iniquity; and who are neither ashamed nor afraid to avow themselves the servants of God, for they have his name on their foreheads; and whom, though men may call them heretics or hypocrites, the Lord himself knoweth to be his. It signifies, that those whose religion is drawn from the bible shall continue to adhere to Christ in spite of all persecutions, until that day when the 1000 years of purity, peace, and triumph to the church of Christ shall commence. Hence, this hieroglyphical number signifies at

once

once, the character and the continuance of those sealed servants of God. When that 1000 years shall commence, their characters shall remain the same, and their religion shall still be built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

But the number 144,000 shall be quite too small to represent the countless multitude which shall be added to the church at that glorious æra, when these faithful 144,000 shall have finished the Christian warfare, and shall begin to sing their triumph. Then the church shall be represented, as in chapter vii. 9. and in verse 6th of this chapter, by “a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.” When the millennium shall commence, signified by the Lamb standing on mount Sion, those persons who adhered to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus shall be openly acknowledged as the true members of Christ’s church.

The millennium is described at full length in chapters xx. xxi. and xxii. and its nature shall be explained in the commentary on them.

However many have wondered after Papal and other superstitions, yet amid all the trials of the preceding period, not one of those chosen servants of God hath been led into destructive errors and sins. They are God’s sealed ones, and have there-

fore escaped the spiritual hurt which hath been brought upon the western empire by superstition, chap. vii. 2, 3. Their names are written in the book of life of the Lamb. They are therefore excepted from the number of those who worship the Beast, chap. xiii. 8. They are the elect of God, and therefore it is impossible to deceive them to their final destruction, Matth. xxiv. 24.

This period shall be introduced by an unsettled and fluctuating state of the empire, and of some of the kingdoms in it, and by a great war, or rather a decisive battle. These are expressed by “the voice of many waters and the voice of a great thunder.” When it is introduced, these sealed ones shall praise God in the assembly of the true church of Christ, which is represented here as in chap. iv. 6,—10. by the four ($\zeta\omega\alpha$) living creatures and the 24 elders. The song which they shall sing is recorded at full length in chap. xix. 5,—7. to which this passage is only an introduction. It is “Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his bride hath made herself ready.” This is indeed a new song. A song which Christians have never yet been able to sing, and never shall sing, until that period shall come which is predicted in this chapter. The import of that song and the grounds on which it is styled new, shall

shall be illustrated in the commentary on chap. xix. 5,—7. This song none shall be able to learn but true Christians. When the meaning of that song is explained, it will appear, that they only can fully understand its import; that they only will rejoice on account of those events to which it refers; and that they only can sing praise, with that inward devotion and gratitude of heart, which are necessary to the praise of that God, who is only worshipped when worshipped in spirit and in truth.

At that period, as well as at the present time, none but true Christians rightly know, and are properly affected by, spiritual things. 1 Cor. ii. 14. 15. “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual discerneth all things, yet he himself is discerned of no man.”

The character of these true servants of God, is marked by five particular qualities, for which they are eminently distinguished.

1st, “They were not defiled with women; for they are virgins.” For obvious reasons, idolatry and superstition, are expressed in the symbolical language, by fornication and adultery, both in the old and new testament, and particularly in this book. These servants of God have always

been distinguished, by keeping clear of idolatry and superstition. They worshipped and served God only. They worshipped the one God only, through Christ Jesus, the one Mediator between God and man. They regarded not, as doctrines of God, the commandments of men; nor did they make void the law of God by human traditions. They dared not to live in the neglect of any means of worship which God had instituted, nor to observe any which had not the stamp of divine authority.

2d, " They follow the Lamb whithersoever he " goeth." Whether Christ goeth to the wilderness, or to mount Zion, they follow him. Worldly fame, preferments, and emoluments, never make them model their religion and their characters to the times and the fashions. Fully convinced that the religion, which they have learned from Christ, is the best the world ever saw or ever shall see, they have no inclination to change it. They follow Christ through good and through bad report. Though they prudently shun danger; yet when called to it, in the course of providence, they willingly part with property, liberty, fame, and even life itself, rather than deny Christ and Christianity.

3d, " They were redeemed from among men, " being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb." They were rescued by the providence and the grace of God, from among those votaries of idola-

try

try and superstition, among whom they lived in the world. Like the first fruits in the Jewish church, they are consecrated and holy unto the Lord, and the earnest of the plentiful harvest in its season. As certainly as they have been holy to the Lord, so certainly shall the great multitudes of Christians at the millennium appear, as the full harvest in its season.

4th, "In their mouth was found no guile." They are Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile. They are sincere and upright towards God, and they pay a sacred regard to truth and fidelity towards men. As citizens of Zion they speak the truth in their heart. And

5th, "They are without fault before the throne of God." However, much their characters have been misunderstood or misrepresented by men; however, they have been traduced as fanatics, hypocrites, or those who turn the world upside down; and however many of them have been condemned as heretics in the courts of men; they shall be declared faultless, when they shall stand before the throne of God. God will not condemn them, when he judgeth. Having trusted in the merits of Christ, and not in those of any saint, nor in indulgences and pardons obtained for money, from those persons, who cannot forgive sins; having had their hearts and lives purified, not by superstitious lustrations, but by that grace of God, which,
bringing

bringing salvation, teacheth men that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in a present world; having not denied, but confessed Jesus before men, they shall be found, at last, meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Jesus shall confess them, and say unto them; "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world;" and then, with the righteous before the throne of God, they shall go unto life eternal.

Verses 6th, 7th.—And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people, saying, with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgement is come: And worship him that hath made heaven and earth, and the sea and the fountains of water.

When these first fruits shall all be offered up to God, then the millennium, the great harvest of the church shall draw nigh. The gospel shall then be preached in purity, and with effect, to those who dwell in the western empire, them who dwell

dwell in the earth. Till that time, it shall be preached as it were in this or that corner; but then it shall be preached in the middle of the church, and shall spread to every corner of it. For John saw this angel fly in the midst of heaven. Then the inhabitants of the western empire, shall not be one great empire and people, as they were in John's day, but they shall be divided into different kingdoms, under different forms of government, and speaking different languages, as they are in our day, and as they actually became at the precise time predicted by John, as shall appear in the commentary on chap. xvii. 12. He therefore designs them here, every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. They shall then, in the course of providence, receive a loud call to fear God more than man, to worship him who created and preserved all things, and no longer to worship the beast.

A strong reason is assigned why, at that time, they should fear, worship, and glorify God, even "because the hour of his judgement is come." By the hour of his judgement is signified that time, when the truth of Christ's religion shall no longer be supported merely by the private testimony of individual Christians, who, in this book are stiled the two witnesses; but shall be established, beyond all doubt, by the solemn judgement of God in its favours, when, in the course of his providence, he shall

shall overthrow Antichrist, his kingdom and church, and shall fully establish the Christian church, in its scriptural purity, through the whole world. What more powerful motive than this, could be presented to their minds. If they complied with the exhortation, they would instantly enjoy much greater advantages, than those men could do, who had lived before them; and if they rejected it, they would greatly increase their guilt and their doom, by sinning against greater light and privileges.

At the approach of every great change of their religious privileges to the better, God hath addressed mankind in a similar manner; by referring to their privileges as a powerful motive to improve them. The publication of the moral law, on mount Sinai, was thus introduced, *Exod. xx. 2.* "I am the Lord thy God, which hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." The preaching of the gospel to mankind, by the personal ministration, death, and resurrection of Christ, was thus introduced by John the Baptist, *Matth. iii. 2.* "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Verse 8th.—And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations

tions drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

In this verse, and in all other parts of this book, where Babylon occurs, it does not signify the ancient city or empire of Babylon. That city and empire were both totally overthrown many hundred years before this book was written; and therefore never could be the object of predictions, which are contained in it. Babylon is always used in this book as a symbol to represent another city and kingdom, to which Babylon bore a most striking resemblance. The epithet "the great city," which is given to Babylon in this verse, and in the other parts of this book where that name is used, plainly shews that it is to be understood symbolically.

Our translation of this verse, is not sufficiently correct and clear. The original runs thus, *επεσε βαβυλων η πολις η μεγαλη*, which should have been rendered, "Babylon the great city is fallen, "is fallen," and not "*that* great city." In chap. xvi. 19. It is called *βαβυλων η μεγαλη*, that is, "Babylon the great; and not, as in our translation great "Babylon." And in chap. xvii. 5. it is called "Babylon the great;" which is rightly translated, as it is the very same phrase in the original.

One first principle in the symbolical language, is, that what is small is the symbol of what is great.

of the same or of a similar kind. For instance, a day is the symbol of a year, because each of them signifies the time measured by a complete revolution of the earth, and the former is the lesser. The reason of this principle is evident from the nature of the hieroglyphical characters or paintings, from which the symbolical language is derived. In such paintings, it was always necessary to make the pictures much less than the things represented by them, otherwise, hieroglyphical writings could not have been contained in any reasonable bounds, nor indeed could they have been practicable at all. Hence when, in any symbolical writings, such as this book is, any thing is called, "the great," the meaning of this epithet is, that the thing to which it is given is not to be understood literally, but is the symbol of something, greater than itself, to which it bears a striking resemblance. Thus Babylon, without the epithet "the great," literally signifies the antient city of Babylon, the capital of the Assyrian empire; but Babylon "the great" signifies a greater city and empire, of which, in many of its most striking features, Babylon was a very fit type. Thus, in chapter xi. 8. Sodom and Egypt are called *the great city*, because they are there used, not literally, but symbolically for Rome.

In this verse, and in all the other parts of this book, where it occurs, Babylon the great, signifies
Papal

Papal Rome, as shall be fully shewn in the commentary on chap. xvii. from an explanation of this symbol given by the same unerring spirit, who dictated this book to John. In pride, luxury, idolatry, and persecution of the church of God, Babylon resembled Papal Rome. Every unprejudiced person, who is acquainted with the history of both empires, must be convinced that, in these particular features, Rome is the greater of the two. At the time to which this chapter refers, Papal Rome shall be certainly and completely overthrown. She shall be destroyed, because she hath intoxicated all nations with her idolatry and superstition ; on account of which they have often felt the effects of divine wrath.

Verses 9th, 10th, 11th.—And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out, without mixture, into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb : And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever : And they have no rest

day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

When the time of the final overthrow of Papal Rome shall draw near, the evidences that the Papal hierarchy is Antichristian, and that the religion which is modelled upon the simplicity and purity of the bible, is the religion of Jesus, shall be so strong, striking and universal, that an adherence then to Popish idolatry shall be punished with exquisite and endless misery, in a future state.

The words in these verses are so plain and strong that they need no comment. Here, however, it may not be improper to observe, that this is the first passage, in this book, in which future misery is denounced against men merely for their Popery. In every part of Europe, before the Reformation, the greatest part of the people were so totally without the means of information, that that ignorance, which was the mother of their Popish devotion, was, certainly, as to them, a kind of necessary ignorance. In most Popish countries, to this day, though some of their leaders may be informed, artful, interested, and designing men, the great body of the people are in a state of necessary ignorance. How God will deal with well disposed persons, at the day of final judgement, who, in the course of his providence, having been placed

placed in these situations, have professed themselves Roman Catholics in this world, it is not our province to determine, any more than it is with respect to those, who, in heathen countries, long have been, and still are placed under a similar necessary ignorance. We know not the utmost extent of the merit of Christ's blood, nor all the secret avenues by which the Spirit of God can convey his purifying grace unto the hearts of men. But we know, that the Judge of all the earth, ever does that which is right, and that he hath said to us, relative to such cases, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant, to his own master he standeth or falleth." As nothing is said with respect to their future doom, in this book, until the period comes, in which they cannot plead necessary ignorance as an apology for their superstition; let us learn that it is our duty to say nothing with respect to it. The secret things belong to the Lord our God; but the things, "that are revealed belong unto us." Let us pity and pray for those deluded men. Let us, by the spiritual and gentle means which the gospel prescribes, and by these only, do what we can to convey to them the knowledge, and to make them feel the power of that kingdom of God, which is not meats and drinks, but truth, righteousness, peace and joy in the holy Ghost. Let us bless God, that our situation in the world is so much more favourable for
the

the discovery of truth, and the proper exercise of the rights of conscience. And let us improve these privileges; lest either a contempt of them, or a false confidence in them, should render our guilt and our doom greater than that of these deluded men, whom too many are apt, with an unchristian temper, to doom, in a body, to eternal destruction.

Verses 12th, 13th.—Here is the patience of the faints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, faith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

At the beginning of the reign of the Beast, we heard the same thing said of the patience and faith of the faints, chap. xiii. 10. What was said of their faith and patience at the commencement, is now said of them at the end of his reign. The long period of 1243 years shall not be able to exhaust their patience, shake their faith, nor make them abandon the service of God. At that period, it shall fully appear that their faith, patience, and obedience, have been built upon a good foundation,

tion, when every thing relative to Christ's kingdom hath in fact come to pass just as they believed and hoped.

To die in the Lord, is to die believing in Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God, and purified by his Spirit and word. It is to die interested in Christ, in such a manner as to be justified and rendered eternally happy through him. "There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."

Those who thus die in the Lord, are pronounced blessed. 1st, Because they shall rest from their toils and labours in this world. And 2^d, Because their works shall follow them, or, more agreeably to the original, shall follow so closely that they may almost be said to go along with them. By this expression it is not only intimated that, in a future state, none of their labours of love shall be forgotten by that God whom they had served in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation; but also, in this world, in a short time after their death, full justice shall be done to their characters and memory, at the commencement of the millenium. At whatever time they yield to the stroke of death, those who die in the Lord are blessed. But the death of such is pronounced peculiarly blessed at that time, in reference to the bloody and violent wars, in which Antichrist, after his last
and

and most violent struggle, shall be totally overthrown.

The following verses of this chapter open to us a general view of these. Hence, the particular meaning of this verse, as introduced in this part of the prophecies, is this : So violent shall be the last struggle which Antichrist shall make to preserve his dominion, so bloody shall the wars be which shall immediately precede his final overthrow, and so many shall be the calamities of war to which men shall be exposed, that even death itself, however repugnant to the feelings of nature, would be desirable, when compared to the calamities of that war, to every man who is in such a state that happiness would be his portion after death.

Verses 14th,—20th.—And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap : for the time is come for thee to reap ; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud, thrust in his sickle on the earth ;

earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth: for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. And the wine-press was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse-bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

This passage contains a general account of the wars by which Papal Rome shall be overthrown. As these are more particularly described in some of the following parts of this book, to which these verses are introductory, it will be proper to defer the full explication of them until I shall explain these parts. I shall therefore only in general take notice of a few striking things in this introduction. At that period, Christ shall appear on a white cloud, with a golden crown on his head, and

a sharp sickle in his hand. Then the cloud which had hung over the church of Christ since the year 756 shall not be totally dispelled: but having become gradually thinner since the Reformation, it shall be a white cloud. A thick cloud is always black. The thinner any cloud is, it is proportionally whiter, because more of the rays of the sun and more of the clear aether are seen through it. Soon after that time, the clouds shall be totally dispelled, whenever the violent but short wars predicted in this passage shall terminate.

At the Reformation, the two witnesses representing Christians, ascended up to heaven in a cloud, chap. xi. 12. It was not called a white cloud at that time, being then so thick as to hang over the church for above four hundred years. But at the period to which this prediction refers, it is called a white cloud, because probably it shall not then hang over the church for more than one year.

Christ has a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand, to signify, that at that period his kingdom shall begin to shew its strength and power over his enemies, particularly over that enemy, who with peculiar propriety is called Antichrist. It was the harvest of the *earth* which he was to reap, because it was ripe. At that time, the Papal Roman empire shall be ripe in sin, and ripe for destruction. God had allowed that people

ple above 1240 years under a great variety of dispensations of his providence, to repent of their opposition to that kingdom of God which is truth, righteousness, peace, and joy ; but they repented not. They shall at that period become ripe for destruction, and the time predicted for their final overthrow shall draw near.

The angel who has power over fire is introduced here. Fire purifies, warms, and also totally consumes. It is rendered beneficial or destructive by the management of the person who has it under his power. In the symbolical language, fire signifies wars and contentions, frequently styled fiery trials. By the angel who had power over fire, it is signified, that neither have any of the wars and contentions that have happened in the Roman empire sprung up by chance, nor shall the last and most dreadful one come by chance, with which that empire shall terminate, but they are all overruled by the superintendency of divine providence. They shall all be directed by divine providence to the purposes which God intended, and not to those which these men intend, who are only the instruments in them, though they imagine themselves the prime agents. Many of these were carried on by Papal Rome against the church of Christ, in order to destroy her : but divine providence overruled them to the purposes of purifying her and keeping her

zeal in proper heat. In all these she is that bush which burned and was not consumed, because the angel of the Lord was in the flame of fire in the midst of the bush. But when he who overrules wars shall give the command, the war predicted in this passage shall, at once completely purify the church of Christ and destroy Papal Rome.

The language of this war shall be, "Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe." It is still on the *earth*, the Roman empire, that destruction shall be brought by this war. In verse 15th it is the harvest of the earth which shall be reaped, and in verse 18th it is the clusters of the vine of the earth which shall be gathered; and both for the same reason, because they are fully ripe. There are two reasons why these two symbols are used to represent the final overthrow of the same empire. 1st, Because that empire though one, is made up of two distinct and different parts, a civil and an ecclesiastic government: parts in themselves essentially different, and yet inseparably interwoven in the very constitution of the Papal government. Hence, the destruction of each part is predicted by a symbol peculiar to itself.

A ripe harvest, signifies a civil government ripe for destruction. The destruction of Tyre and Zidon is thus expressed in Joel iii. 13. "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe." And of the
final

final overthrow of Babylon it was said in Jeremiah li. 33. "Yet a little while and the time of her harvest shall come." And a vine signifies a church. The Jewish church is represented by a vine in the beautiful allegory contained in Psalm lxxx. 8,—16. The Christian church in its head and members is styled the true vine, and represented by a vine and its branches in John xv. 1,—5. Of a false and idolatrous church it is said in Deut. xxxii. 32. "Their vine is of the vine of Sodom." That we may be at no loss to know what church is signified by this vine, in ver. 18. it is called the vine of the *earth*, that is, of the Roman empire. Neither in the symbolical, nor in any alphabetical language ancient or modern do I recollect any one word which signifies both a civil and an ecclesiastical government; hence to represent the complete destruction of that government which is both civil and ecclesiastical, I am of opinion that both these symbols were necessary. The use of both is a plain declaration, that at that period both the church and state of Rome shall be finally overthrown. And *2d*, To signify, that the final overthrow of Rome shall be accomplished by a very bloody war; for the red juice which is pressed from the grape is the symbol of blood shed in wars. It is called the blood of the vine. This meaning is clearly given to the pressing of grapes, by Isaiah lxiii. 1,—6. which passage is a prophecy
of

of the very same bloody wars which are predicted in the verses under our view. This is styled the great wine-press of the wrath of God, to inform us that this shall be the most bloody and destructive war which had ever been brought upon Rome. The last and decisive battle shall be fought very near the city of Rome.

“And blood came out of the wine-press even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.” It is thus predicted that at this battle there shall be cavalry, and that very much blood shall be shed. And as 1600 furlongs, or rather stadia, as they are in the original, are nearly 200 miles of English measure; it is highly probable that by the blood flowing to that distance it is intimated, that the principal field of that last and decisive war shall extend only about 200 miles from the city of Rome. Who the parties shall be in that war, shall be shewn in the proper place under the sixth vial in chap. xvi, 12.—16.

CHAP.

C H A P. XV.

Verse 1st. **A**ND I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

In this chapter, the introduction to the subsequent prophecies of this book, which was begun in the preceding one, is continued. With this one the introduction ends, and the prophecies themselves begin with the following chapter.

John saw *another* sign in heaven. By this mode of expression, he refers to a former sign which he had seen in heaven. In chap. xii. 1. that other sign is thus mentioned, "and there appeared a great wonder in heaven," or as it ought to have been translated, (and hath been explained in the commentary on that passage), a great *sign*. In both places, the word in the original is the same, σημεῖον; and its proper signification is a sign. This sign is said to be in *heaven*, because these plagues have been and shall be inflicted on Papal Rome for her injuries to the church of Christ, and shall

shall be a sign by which Christians shall know Antichrist, and shall be confirmed in the belief of his final overthrow.

This sign is mentioned in reference to the former sign of the woman in the wilderness, because they shall be cotemporary. During the whole period of the church's persecuted state, that is, from the rise to the final overthrow of the beast, these seven plagues or judgements shall be poured out on Papal Rome in succession; and the last of them shall overthrow her, and set the church at liberty. They are called the *last* plagues, because the whole temporal judgements which God shall inflict on Papal Rome shall be included in them.

Verses 2d, 3d, 4th.—And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways; thou king of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name! For
thou

thou only art holy : for all nations shall come and worship before thee ; for thy judgements are made manifest.

After the seven vials had all been poured out ; that is, immediately upon the final overthrow of Antichrist, John saw a sea of glass mingled with fire. In the commentary on chap. iv. 6, it was shewn, that, in allusion to the sea in the temple for purification, the sea of glass signifies the purifying influences of Christ. Here it is mingled with fire to predict that, at that time the wrath of the Lamb shall be kindled against, and shall consume his enemies. Then, the saints of God shall obtain a complete victory over heathen and Papal Rome. This victory they shall obtain through Christ. By him they and their cause have always been purified and supported, and their enemies restrained, and shall at last be subdued : For they stand on the sea of glass.

Then the victorious church of Christ shall rejoice and sing praise unto God. Consisting of Jews and Gentiles united into one true church of God, they shall sing in concert the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb. These are mentioned here as two songs quite well known. It is not said *a* song, as if it had been a song then made for the occasion, or any song of Moses and the Lamb : but *the song*, to intimate that there are two parti-

cular songs, well known by the names of the "song of Moses," and "the song of the Lamb," and that, though these songs were dictated by the Spirit of God many hundred years before, they were prepared for the very occasion in which the united church of Jews and Gentiles shall praise God, for the final overthrow of Antichrist. The song of Moses is recorded at full length in Deut. xxxii. 1,—43, and that passage has "the song of "Moses," prefixed to it as its title. It merits the serious and attentive perusal of every reader. It predicts all the calamities which have befallen the Jews, and the cause of them. It foretells the character, rise, height, and downfall of Antichrist; and closes with the Jews and Gentiles united in one church, singing in concert their triumph over their common enemy. How striking is the last verse of that song, "Rejoice O ye Gentiles, with "his people, for he will revenge the blood of his "servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land and "to his people." The same word, in the original, signifies Gentiles and nations, and indeed these words are of the same import in the English language. His people, in the old testament, always signifies the Jews, as distinguished from all other nations. The song of the Lamb is recorded in this book, chap. v. 8,—14. How exactly does this song celebrate the joyful occasion of the commencement

mencement of the millennium, and represent both Jew and Gentile united in the same triumphant victory over Antichrist? At that period, the predictions contained in both these songs shall be fully accomplished.

The verses now under our view contain a short compend of these two songs. This compend, like the songs themselves, has a particular reference to the time and occasion, on which it shall be sung, even the final overthrow of Papal Rome, and the commencement of the millennium.

“Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord “God Almighty.” In this part of the song, the works of divine providence, and grace are celebrated. The events which shall then take place, shall illustriously display the great and wonderful nature of the works of providence and grace, which brought about these events, and prepared the church and the world for them. The various steps, by which Papal Rome rose, came to its height, declined and fell, are great and marvellous. The various ways, by which, in every age, even the darkest, a seed hath been preserved to serve God; and by which, these few persecuted Christians, called heretics by their enemies, shall be rendered completely victorious over hell and Rome, without the use of fire, sword, or fighting on their part, are great and marvellous. The various ways by which the people of the Jews, for so ma-

ny hundred years, have been preserved distinct from all nations, while they have been scattered through almost every nation of the earth; by which, at that period, they shall be brought to lay aside their strong and inveterate prejudices against Christ and Christianity, and shall embrace both at the very time when Messiah's kingdom shall become triumphant over the Roman empire; and all the kingdoms of the world, are great and marvellous: The minute exactness, with which all these events shall correspond to the early predictions of the prophets of God; the active hand, which men have had in bringing them about, whilst, unrestrained in their moral powers by the determinate purposes of heaven, they intended and acted freely as accountable creatures, are great and marvellous. The influence of divine providence and grace in gradually preparing, and at last fully forming men's minds to that truth, righteousness, peace; and joy, which shall characterize the age of the millennium, is great and marvellous. The extent and clearness of perception, the purity and height of joy, with which the saints of God, at that period, shall contemplate these works of divine providence and grace; and, perhaps, many of the ways or circumstances of divine providence and grace, which, at present, entirely escape our notice, are great and marvellous.

With

With respect to his works of providence, God is adored as the Lord, the righteous and supreme Lord and Governor of the universe. With respect to his works of grace he is praised as God, the sole Object and Author of all religious worship. And with respect to both he is styled the Almighty, because by the omnipotence of his power, he, with perfect ease, overcomes every obstacle, and accomplishes all the purposes of his will; and, especially, because, at that period, the extent and omnipotence of his providence and grace shall be illustriously displayed in the state of the world and of the church.

“Just and true are thy ways thou king of saints.” God is the king of saints. He hath put his law within them, and written it on their hearts, and thus they are his people. He is to them the only Lord over the conscience. In matters of religion, they call no man on earth master. He only prescribes to them the laws of their religion, he governs, protects, and conducts them; he restrains, and, at the period referred to in this chapter, shall conquer their enemies, and raise them to victory, when as foretold by Daniel, “he shall give the kingdom to the people of the saints of the Most High.” His ways both to his saints his subjects, and their enemies, are just and true, and at that period shall clearly appear to have been so. The justice of his ways to their enemies shall

shall appear, in the seven great calamities which shall be poured out of the seven vials on the head of Papal Rome, for her cruelties to, and persecutions of the saints. These judgements shall exactly correspond to their iniquities, both in kind and degree. The ways of God shall then evidently appear just. All the toils, persecutions, and contempt, to which his saints had been exposed in the preceding period, shall be abundantly compensated in the purity, peace, prosperity, and glory of the millennium state. It shall then fully appear that his ways are not only just, but also true. That during the whole of the preceding period, his ways both to his saints and their enemies exactly corresponded to the truth of things, and were the fittest to persons of their character, in their situation, and in that stage of society and of religion in which they were in fact placed. Then their truth shall appear in the exact correspondence of his various ways to his saints and to their enemies, to the promises and threatenings predicted in his word. Of Papal Rome he said, chap. xiii. 10. "He that leadeth unto captivity shall go
"unto captivity; he that killeth with the sword
"shall be killed with the sword." The final overthrow of Papal Rome shall prove, that this threatening was true. God promised chap. v. 10. "that the saints should be made kings and priests
"unto God, and should reign on the earth," and

in chap. vi. 9,—11 (to which, and the commentary upon it the reader is referred), that their reign upon earth, and their vengeance upon their enemies, shall not commence until the persecutions of Christians by Papal Rome shall be ended. When Rome shall no longer be able to persecute, and when the millennium shall commence, shall it not then appear that these promises were true?

“ Who shall not fear thee O Lord, and glorify thy name, for thou only art holy.” Moral excellences properly assembled in the highest possible perfection, in one character is absolute holiness. Such holiness is peculiar to God. In this sense, God only is holy. He is the thrice holy one. It is his holiness which renders God the proper object of religious worship. If we could suppose his natural perfections separated from his moral perfections, he would not be the object of worship, but of dread and aversion. But, it is his holiness which fills the minds of his intelligent, rational, and religious creatures with that esteem, love, and trust, which lead them to worship him, nay, which affections themselves are the worship of God. The state of the world at the millennium, when the mystery of God shall be finished; when ignorance, error, vice, and misery shall be conquered, and truth, righteousness, and peace shall be triumphant; and when the steps in divine providence, which led to that state through so many intricate windings, are
clearly

clearly seen, shall exhibit in a most striking point of view the holiness of God. Such a striking view of the holiness of God shall excite men to worship God in sincerity, and to glorify him by well-ordered conversations.

“For all nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgements are made manifest.” These acquainted with the Greek language, by looking into the original, will clearly perceive, that as the article *τα* is prefixed to *ἔθνη*, it ought not to have been translated *nations*, but should have been translated *the nations*, or rather *the Gentiles*, though the words in reality are of the same import; but their common acceptation is different. This is the very word which is translated *Gentiles* in all the passages of the New Testament where we meet with this term *the Gentiles*. At that period, all the *Gentiles* shall come and worship God in spirit and in truth. Then shall be accomplished the prediction of Paul, Rom. xi. 25. 26. “For I would not brethren that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, that blindness in part happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the *Gentiles* be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, there shall come out of *Zion* the Deliverer, and he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

Δικαιώματα, the word translated *judgements*, does not signify those calamities and great sufferings, which

which men commonly call judgements. It signifies the judgements or sentences pronounced by a judge on the bench. The word here used does not signify the judgements or sentences of a judge in general; but, as those acquainted with the Greek language must know, it signifies a sentence of approbation or justification. This sentence passed by God himself, the supreme Judge of controversy, in favours of the church of Christ, and published or manifested by the great events which shall take place at that period, is assigned as the reason why the fullness of the Gentiles shall then come in. It was formerly shewn in chap. xi. that, from the year of Christ 756 to the end of the year 1999, the church of Christ is represented by two witnesses. During that period, the cause is, comparatively speaking, undecided, whether the church of Rome or the church of Christ is the true church of God. True Christians steadily give their testimony as witnesses, in favours of the latter; but some men take one side of the question, and others the other; and multitudes calling in question the knowledge or the veracity of these two witnesses, hence, during that period, take the wrong side of that important and interesting question. But, when in the course of divine providence, Papal Rome shall be completely overthrown, in the manner and at the time predicted in this book; when those whose religion consists in that truth, right-

teousness, peace, and joy, which the bible teaches, shall in the course of divine providence increase in number and rise into high respect in the world; these events shall be justly considered, as they are in themselves the publication of the judgement or sentence of God himself, in favours of the pure, simple, and scriptural religion of Christ. This view which the minds of men shall take of these events, shall be one principal instrument in the hand of God, at that period, to make all the Gentiles come and worship before God.

Verses 5th,—8th.—And after that, I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: and the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

The

The temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven, signifies the church of Christ during the period of 1243 years preceding the final overthrow of Papal Rome. In chapter xi. 1, 2. it is called "the temple, the altar, and them that worship therein," as distinguished from "the court which is without the temple," and from "the holy city."

Out of the church, during this period, came seven angels having seven plagues. The seven plagues, which, under seven distinct dispensations of divine providence, partly have been and partly shall be brought upon Papal Rome, as predicted in the following chapter, shall all be brought upon her in her public or national character, for the injuries which she hath done, and still shall do, in that character, to the persecuted church of Christ, during that period. That these plagues upon Rome shall come out of the church of Christ, during that period, is intimated, chap. xi. 6. "These have power to smite the earth, (the empire) with all plagues as often as they will."

These angels, like the high priest under the law, are clothed with pure and white linen, and have their breasts girded with golden girdles. Thus it is symbolically represented that these dispensations are the ministers of God; that they strictly execute the divine command, and act only ministerially in bringing those plagues upon Papal

Rome. Though the persecution of the Christian church is the real cause, why these plagues are brought upon Rome; though these are predicted in those scriptures which Christians believe to be the word of God, yet, in all these, Christians are clothed in pure and white linen, for they entertain no revenge nor malice against the votaries of Rome. Like their great master, they have often, with their dying breath, prayed for their persecutors. "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." They have no active hand neither intentionally nor even unintentionally in inflicting these plagues upon Rome, as shall appear in the commentary on the following chapter.

"And one of the four living creatures," (mentioned and explained in the commentary on chap. iv. 6, 7, 8,) "gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials." The gospel ministry shall, from the predictions of scripture, explain these events to mankind before they happen. This is their duty, because this book, not being sealed, is a part of that inspired scripture, out of which they are to teach the church of Christ. By this it is predicted that some of the ministers of the gospel shall, in fact explain these predictions.

"These are golden vials full of the wrath of God." By this hieroglyphic it is predicted that all these plagues shall be poured out by measure. Though the vials are not all of a size, every one of them

them shall be exactly fitted to the occasion, and shall be completely filled up. The nature, degree, and continuance of the calamity, shall all be as exactly fixed and determined by God, as the time of its commencement is. They are vials full of wrath. They are not, like the trumpets sent to alarm, rouse, and correct the church of Christ; but are sent to punish Papal Rome as a collective body for her public iniquities. They are *golden* to signify, at once, their strength and their purity. Vials of glass are brittle, and easily broken; but gold is strong and durable. These plagues shall not be turned aside from Rome, nor shall any part of them fall on any other kingdom.

They are pure judgements. They are wrath indeed; but it is not the wrath of man, which is influenced by and proceeds from passion. It is the wrath of God and therefore perfectly pure, and entirely free from every thing like passion. They are great, public and terrible calamities; but not one of them is the effect of anger, revenge, or any other passion. They all proceed from that divine justice, which, with the most perfect exactness, assimilates and proportions the punishment to the transgression.

They are full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. To him who liveth for ever, all times past, present, and to come, are ever present. He can therefore, easily predict these
plagues

plagues long before they happen ; and he can inflict each of them in its proper time, however distant they may be from one another. Between the first and the last of these plagues there shall be nearly 1240 years ; but to him, who liveth for ever, distance of time is nothing.

“ And the temple was filled with smoke from
“ the glory of God, and from his power.” When
the tabernacle was consecrated by Moses and
Aaron, Exod. xl. 34. 35. “ a cloud covered the
“ tent of the congregation, and the glory of God
“ filled the tabernacle : And Moses was not able
“ to enter into the tent of the congregation, be-
“ cause the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of
“ the Lord filled the tabernacle.” And when the
temple was consecrated by the priests, in the
reign of king Solomon, 1 Kings viii. 10, 11, “ It
“ came to pass when the priests were come out of
“ the holy place, that the cloud filled the house
“ of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to
“ minister, because of the cloud, for the glory of
“ the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.” In
reference to these clouds, which filled the taber-
nacle and temple at their consecration, it is here
said the temple was filled with smoke from the glo-
ry of God. The plain meaning of which hierogly-
phic is, that all these persecutions to which Chris-
tians are exposed during the wilderness state of
the church, and all these plagues, which shall be
inflicted

inflicted upon Papal Rome, during that period, and which, at the end of it, shall totally overthrow her, are the ways by which God prepares the settled and glorious state of the millennium; prepares and consecrates the Christian church for that state; and thus builds up and consecrates the temple of the living God. In Eph. ii. 19,—22. Paul styles the collective body of Christians *a holy temple in the Lord*.

As Moses could not enter into the tabernacle, nor the priests into the temple for the cloud, so it is said, here, “no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.” Though the temple as connected with the tabernacle, as in verse 5, signifies the wilderness state of the Christian church, yet it is the temple in a very particular situation. It is the temple shut up. It was formerly shewn that the tabernacle, with peculiar fitness, signified the wilderness state of the church; because it was the place, in which the Jews stately and publicly worshipped God so long as they were in the wilderness: and that the temple signifies the settled and triumphant state of the church at the millennium; because the Jews worshipped in the temple in their settled and prosperous state in the land of Canaan. But as the purest worship of God was performed in the temple, and as certain worshippers, who were not considered as so holy

as

as others, were not allowed to worship in the temple, but only in the outer court, called the court of the Gentiles ; when, as in chap. xi. 1, 2, the outer court, and the holy city were given to the Gentiles for 1243 years, the temple and the altar were excepted ; the meaning of all which is, that, during that period, the outward grandeur, extent, and magnificence of the church of Rome were fitly represented by the outer court and the holy city : But as the temple represents the purest worship, though their grandeur might have been represented by the magnificence, yet their worship did not resemble, and therefore could not have been represented by the purity of the temple worship. But, on the other hand, though the purity of the worship of Christians, might have been represented by the purity of the worship in the temple, yet their persecuted condition for these 1243 years, bearing no resemblance to the magnificence of the temple, nor to the settled state of the Jews when they worshipped in it, the temple as a place of worship could not be the symbol for the Christian church during that period.

What then shall become of the temple as a symbol, since as an open place of worship, it accords neither to the state of the Christian church, nor to that of the church of Rome, during that period. It must be shut up ; for the temple of
God

God must not be profaned. But let it be given to Christians thus shut up. Let them, in the mean time, worship in the tabernacle: But let them look forward with hope to that glorious period, when their wilderness period shall end; when the temple shall be opened; when it shall be fully consecrated; when the cloud of its consecration shall be dispelled; and when, in the millennium state, they shall worship God in purity, peace, and triumph. Into this opened temple or millennium state of the church, none shall enter till all these seven plagues shall be fulfilled. When we consider these seven plagues, in the following chapter, it shall appear that the last of them shall not be fulfilled till the final overthrow of Papal Rome, in the end of the year 1999; and, consequently, that the entrance of Christians into the opened and consecrated temple shall not be till after that year. It will be in the beginning of the year of Christ 2000, which year shall, in its proper place, be shewn to be the commencement of the millennium.

CHAP. XVI.

Verse 1st, **A**ND I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

This chapter contains a long and connected chain of predictions, under the hieroglyphic of the seven vials full of the wrath of God. That they are judgements, which shall be inflicted for the sins of those, on whom they are poured, is evident from the expression, “vials of the wrath of God.”

They are to be poured out upon the *earth*; that is, according to the symbolical language, and to the invariable use of the term in this book, upon the Roman empire; and upon the empire too in a fixed and uniform state: for it is upon the *earth*, not upon the *sea*, that dissolved and fluctuating state of the empire, out of which the Papal hierarchy rose to the rank of a temporal government, as in chap. xiii. 1.

But

But it may be asked, on what state or period of the Roman empire shall these judgements fall? The question is important; the answer to it is very necessary; and it is not more necessary than clear from the plain language of this chapter itself. In verse 2d, it is said that the “first vial was poured upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.” But it was shewn in chap. xiii. that the rise of the beast, (*θηριον*), signifies the commencement of the Papal or seventh head of Roman government. In chap. xiii. 14,—17. it was shewn, that the men who had the mark of the beast and who worshipped his image, signified the votaries of Papal Rome. Since then the first vial was poured out on them who had the mark of the beast, and upon them who worshipped the image of the beast, the first of these plagues could not happen till after the rise of the beast, and till after he had votaries to worship him. Hence, it is as plainly expressed in the symbolical language that the first of these judgements fell upon Papal Rome, soon after it became a temporal government, that is, soon after the year of Christ 756, as it could have been if it had been said so in common language. From verses 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st of this chapter, it is evident that the judgement poured out of the seventh or last

vial represents the complete and final overthrow of Papal Rome. If then the first of these vials was poured out on Rome soon after the commencement of the Papal government, and if the last of them contains those judgements which shall completely overthrow that government, it must be as plain as words can make it that the state and period of the Roman empire, on which these plagues shall fall, is the Papal one, from its rise in 756 to its final overthrow in 1999. If this fact needs any farther proof, it shall receive it as we proceed in the explication of the different vials in their order.

These vials predict judgements which shall be brought upon Papal Rome in this world, in their national capacity, for those injuries which in that capacity they have done to Christians. These judgements shall follow one another in the exact order of the vials themselves. They shall not be instantaneous; each of them shall commence at the exact time when its respective vial shall be poured out, but it shall continue for a considerable time, most probably to near the time of the commencement of the following vial.

The first five of these vials have already been poured out on Papal Rome. We must therefore search for the judgements signified by them in the history of Papal Rome preceding the period in which we live. As we proceed, her history shall afford

afford an exact and complete comment on these predictions. These judgements too are to be considered as one of those signs by which God calls upon us to distinguish between the church of Christ and the church of Rome. By the alarming calamities predicted by the seven trumpets, and by the wilderness state of the church, the Christian church was to be known during this period. This was the great sign mentioned in chap. xii. and these judgements of the seven last plagues upon Papal Rome are the other sign mentioned in chap. xv. by which the church of Rome shall be known. These plagues come not by chance: They are dispensations of divine providence, in every respect obedient to the command of God.

These seven angels cannot pour out their respective vials, till they receive the command from him whom all things, animate and inanimate, must obey. His is a great voice, such as the most distant of these events in point of time or place must obey, as well as the nearest of them. This voice came out of the temple. These judgements shall be inflicted on Rome for her injuries to the church of Christ. They are foretold in those inspired scriptures, which contain the rule of faith and obedience, by which that church conducts herself; and when Christians shall arrive at the state represented by the opened temple, they shall clearly see how exactly all these judgements had been predicted

predicted in the bible, and accomplished in the course of divine providence. In this introductory verse, these judgements are said to be poured out upon the empire in general. Under the particular vials in the course of this chapter, the different parts or members of the empire on which the judgements shall fall are specified.

Verse 2d.—And the first went and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

The first judgement was to fall upon the earth itself, the very constitution of the Papal government. And it was to be a noisome and grievous sore upon the votaries of Rome, viewed both in their civil and religious character. The former of these is expressed by the men who had the mark of the beast, that is, who were the marked slaves of Rome; and the latter by them who worship his image. The supremacy of the Papal power over temporal kings and princes; the infallibility of the church of Rome in matters of doctrine and worship; the glory, and something like divinity and infallibility of the Popes, are interwoven in the constitution of the Papal government: These three qualities of
its

its constitution were almost idolized by the votaries of Rome. A judgement therefore by which these parts of the Papal constitution received a shock, is most fitly denominated one upon the constitution itself. It is one which the citizens of Rome must feel as a noisome and grievous sore upon them, whether their zeal for the civil or religious supremacy of Rome is the greatest. As this is the first of these vials, the judgement contained in it, predicted by John above 650 years before the rise of the Papal government, must have fallen upon Rome soon after the erection of the Papal empire, that is, soon after the year 756.

Looking into the history of Rome at that time, we shall find the most minute accomplishment of this predicted judgement. In the end of the eighth century, during the whole of the ninth, and a great part of the tenth century, the western empire was torn by contending princes. The Lombards invaded Italy. The Pope was obliged to apply to Charlemagne for succour. The treasures and lands which the church of Rome possessed in Sicily, Calabria, and Apulia, were confiscated by the Greek emperors. Italy shared in the calamities of these civil discords. Pope John XII. instead of commanding, was obliged in the most abject manner, to implore the assistance of Otho the Great, emperor of Germany for the love of the preservation of the Christian religion, and of Italy.

Italy. The Normans and Saracens invaded the empire, despised the menaces of the Pope, and came even to the walls of Rome.

During this period, the church of Rome was greatly divided about the worship of images, the real presence of the body of Christ in the sacrament of the supper, and the doctrine of predestination. Both sides of all these questions were keenly espoused by different persons in the church of Rome; and different decisions were given upon them, even by councils. One Pope anathematized another Pope, and ordered the dead body of a Pope to be dug out of his grave and thrown into the Tyber. Instead of the Popes deposing emperors, the emperor Otho the Great deposed Pope John XII. and appointed Pope Leo VIII. to fill his place. The number of Popes who succeeded each other during this period was very great; the lives of most of them were, for viciousness, a disgrace to human nature; and many of them were deposed from their high office.

Were not these great calamities upon the very constitution of the Papal hierarchy? and could any judgements be more painful or more disgraceful to the votaries of Rome? If these things can be established from authentic history, the supremacy of Rome over temporal princes, and the infallibility of Popes and councils, must fall to the ground. The passages of history which fully confirm these
facts

facts are so many and so large, that it would be improper to transcribe them all. I shall therefore transcribe only a few of them, and refer the reader to many more of them.

Mosheim *Hist.* cent. viii. Vol. i. page 357.
“ Whilst the power and opulence of the Roman
“ pontiffs were rising to the greatest height by the
“ events which we have now been relating, they
“ received a mortifying check, in consequence of a
“ quarrel which broke out between these haughty
“ pontiffs and the Grecian emperors. Leo the Isau-
“ rian, and his son Constantine Copronious, incensed
“ at the zeal which Gregories II. and III. discover-
“ ed for the worship of images, not only confiscat-
“ ed the treasure and lands which the church of
“ Rome possessed in Sicily, Calabria, and Apulia,
“ but moreover withdrew the bishops of these
“ countries, and also the various provinces and
“ churches of Illyricum from the jurisdiction of
“ the Roman see, and subjected them to the spiri-
“ tual dominion of the bishop of Constantinople.
“ And so inflexibly were the Grecian emperors
“ bent upon humbling the arrogance of the Ro-
“ man pontiffs, that no intreaties, supplications,
“ nor threats, could engage them to abandon their
“ purpose, or to restore this rich and signal por-
“ tion of St Peter’s patrimony to his greedy suc-
“ cessors.”

Pages 371,—373. “The profligate Irene, entered into an alliance with Adrian bishop of Rome, A. D. 786, summoned a council at Nice in Bythinia, which is known by the title of the second Nicene council. In this assembly the imperial laws concerning the new idolatry were abrogated, the decrees of the council of Constantinople reversed, and the worship of images and of the cross restored.—“In the year 794, Charlemagne assembled, at Francfort on the Maine, a council of three hundred bishops, in order to examine this important question; in which the opinion contained in the four books was solemnly confirmed, and the worship of images unanimously condemned. From hence we may conclude, that, in this century, the Latins deemed it neither impious, nor unlawful, to dissent from the opinion of the Roman pontiff, and even to charge that prelate with error.”

Pages 415,—418. “Charles the Bald summoned a new council or synod, which met at Quiercy, A. D. 853, in which, by the credit and influence of Hincmar, the decrees of the former council were confirmed, and of consequence Godescalcus again condemned. But the decrees of this council were declared null; and decisions of a different kind, by which Godescalcus, and his doctrines were vindicated and defended, were substituted in their place,
“in

“ in a council assembled at Valence in Dauphiny,
“ A. D. 855.”

The contests for civil power and dominion between Berenger Duke of Friuli, and Guy Duke of Spoleto, afflicted all Italy with great calamities, in which Rome itself shared very deep, from A. D. 888, to A. D. 960. The Popes themselves had a great hand in exciting these troubles, and had also a great share in them. The parties of Pope Formosus and Sergius raged against each other, with a disgraceful fury. Pope Stephen caused the dead body of Pope Formosus to be dug out of the grave, and after condemnation, to be thrown into the river Tyber. He made all his acts null and void, and took care to have an emperor made of his own party. These contests and calamities, went so far that Pope John XII. A. D. 960, felt himself, the church of Rome, and Italy, in such imminent danger from Berenger and his son Adelbert, that he sent ambassadors to Otho the Great, in Saxony, giving the most pitiful and abject description of his situation and of his forces, and intreating him for the love of the preservation of the Christian religion and of Italy, to lead his army back to Italy, and, after the example of Charlemagne, to rescue the church and Italy from their cruel tyranny.

These facts are recorded, at length, by Sigonius a Roman catholic historian of high character in his

Hist. de regno Italiæ, lib. 6, from page 139 to page 166. For the satisfaction of those who have not an opportunity of consulting that historian, I shall here transcribe a few passages from these pages, which, in the Latin language, in which he writes, contain the substance of what I have said on this subject.

Speaking of Berenger and Guy he says, “ Hi
 “ summam sibi rerum haud malo consilio ascissere
 “ nixi, intestinis populorum discordiis Italiam per-
 “ turbarunt, ac seipsos prorsus una cum ecclesia
 “ perdiderunt. Ea tempora in rempublicam infer-
 “ entes, quibus nulla alia tetrora, ac fœdiora
 “ fuisse, vel principium nequitia, vel populorum
 “ infania, in tota antiquitate inveniuntur.”

In these words, this Roman Catholic writer gives a most exact comment on the *noisome and grievous sore*, when he calls these times, *tetrora ac fœdiora*.

Speaking of the hand which the Pope had in these civil contests he says, “ Major pars, licet
 “ Berengerii causa justior esset, pontificis, credo
 “ auctoritate impulsæ, ad Vidonem se contulit.”

It is worthy of remark that this Roman Catholic writer, says here, that he believes that the pontiff supported Guy, whilst the cause of Berenger, his opponent, was the more righteous.

“ Ac violato Formosi sepulchro, cadaver ejus ex-
 “ traxerunt, ac jussu Stephani in conspectum con-
 “ ventus

“ ventus produxerunt. Quod oculis episcoporum
“ objectum Stephanus pontificalibus vestibus exui,
“ et laicalibus indui iussit; et conventum metu
“ minisque; ut Formosum tanquam simoniæ com-
“ pertum damnaret, adegit. Damnatum inde
“ Sergiani ira, ac libidine inflammati projicierunt
“ in Tiberim. Neque vero hac injuria contentus
“ Stephanus fuit, quin etiam omnia Formosi pon-
“ tificatus acta rescidit, atque in primis, eos, qui
“ initiati ab eo fuerunt, exauctoravit, et Amulsum
“ regem, quem Formosus metu consecrarat impe-
“ ratorem vitio factum esse pronunciavit, Lamber-
“ tum vero regem Italiæ, factionis suæ partes ex-
“ emplo patris fovendum inunxit imperatorem.”

It is scarce possible to conceive words more fit
for predicting this event than “ a noisome and
“ grievous fore upon the men, who had the mark
“ of the beast, and who worshipped his image.”

“ In Italiam vero furentibus in dies vehementi-
“ us regibus cum nemo omnium esset, qui non ex-
“ terno cuicunque obedire imperio, quam huic do-
“ mesticæ servire tyrannidi mallet; Joannes ponti-
“ fex indigna omnia passus Joannem diaconum car-
“ dinalem, et Azonem ferinarium ad Othonem le-
“ gatos cum literis in Saxoniam misit. Summa
“ legationis fuit; Berengarium atque Adelbertum
“ occasione occupationum ejus impulsos multo,
“ quam ante, truculentius, ecclesiam, atque adeo
“ totam Italiam divexare, pertinere ad ejus non
“ dignitatem

“ dignitatem solum, sed securitatem etiam, ipso-
 “ rum adeo infirmas opes esse ut nemini aut nocu-
 “ mento, aut formidini esse possint. Quo circa
 “ orare eum se, ut pro Christianæ religionis atque
 “ Italiæ salutis amore exercitum de integro in Ita-
 “ liam adduceret, atque ecclesiam Italianamque, Ca-
 “ roli Magni exemplo, ab sæva eorum tyrannidi
 “ vindicaret.”

Sigonius tells us that, in the year 846, the Saracens marched up to the city of Rome, plundered the rich churches of the apostles Peter and Paul, and carried away all their precious ornaments, and also the silver doors of the Vatican.

His own words are as follow :—Lib. 5, page 120.
 “ Quippe Saraceni prædæ libidine stimulati ex
 “ Africa classem, Romanis littoribus intulerunt; et
 “ procurfu ad urbem facto, opimas apostolorum
 “ Petri et Pauli suburbanas basilicas, nemine vim
 “ propulsante, diripuerunt, ac preciosis omnibus
 “ earum ornamentis ablatis; ipsas etiam basilicæ
 “ Vaticanæ valvas argenteas absportarunt.”

Mosheim, cent. x. vol. i. pages 447,—451, gives a very particular and long history of the Popes during the tenth century, to which the reader is referred, and from which he will see, that that history well deserved this his introduction to it.—
 “ The history of the Roman pontiffs, that lived in
 “ this century, is a history of so many monsters,
 “ and not of men; and exhibits a horrible series of
 “ the

“ the most flagitious, tremendous, and complicated crimes, as all writers, even those of the Romish communion, unanimously confess.”

The reader is also desired to consult *Masheim, Hist. cent. viii. Vol. i. pages 354, 413, 414, and 415*, for the keen controversies in doctrine and worship which distracted the church of Rome in that century.

These events, thus fully established from authentic history, fall in so exactly with the period of the first vial ; give such a shock to the vaunted constitution of the Papal government ; were felt with such pain and shame by the votaries of Rome in that period ; and are still so severely felt by them who live in the present and every period of their history, that they exactly agree to, and minutely accomplish the prediction of a “ vial poured out upon the earth, and a noisome and grievous sore upon the men who had the mark of the beast, and upon them who worshipped his image.”

Verse 3d.—And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea ; and it became as the blood of a dead man : and every living soul died in the sea.

The second judgement was to fall upon the sea, upon that element by which intercourse is carried

carried on between the empire and foreign nations. This, in an empire constructed upon the principles of the kingdoms of the earth, is literally the sea. It is by navigation on the sea, that either friendly commerce or hostile attacks are carried on between the Roman empire and foreign countries. This judgement upon the sea, was to become in it as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul was to die in the sea. This is a plain description of much bloodshed and death among the subjects of Rome, in a foreign war which should be carried on principally by sea, or in which the field of action should be beyond distant seas.

As the first vial brought us down into the eleventh century, it is reasonable to conclude, that this one shall be found to commence near the end of that century.

If we look into the history of Rome in the end of the 11th, through the whole of the 12th, and in a part of the 13th centuries, we shall meet with the most exact account of these events, in which the judgement predicted in this verse was actually brought upon Rome, in the history of the Croisades, or Holy wars, as they are called. These commenced in the year 1095, when Pope Urban II. after Peter the Hermit had prepared and inflamed the minds of the people for the holy war, assembled the greatest council at Placentia that
had

had ever been known, in order to persuade all Christendom to undertake the sacred expedition against the infidel Saracens, for the purpose of rescuing from their hands the city of Jerusalem, the cross of Christ, and the holy land of Palestine. And they ended in the year 1291, when the Latin empire was entirely overthrown in the east, after the taking of Ptolemais or Acra by the Mahometans.

These wars exactly agree with every article of the prediction. They coincide with the time; and are carried on with the Mahometans, who, in every sense of the word, were foreigners to the citizens of Rome. Whilst all the western empire, however much divided into distinct kingdoms, in some respect acknowledged the Pope as their head, and did this publicly in the affair of the Croisades, the Mahometans acknowledged him in no respect; but, both in civil and religious matters, acknowledged another master, Mahomet.

Well might the sea be said to “ become as “ the blood of a dead man,” so many hundred thousands of the votaries of Rome perished in these mad and superstitious expeditions. In the first croisade above two hundred and eighty thousand perished; in the second about the same number; and in all the different croisades, about two millions of persons perished in the sea, in the field of battle, and of diseases.

With equal propriety may it be said, "that a very living soul died in the sea." For, by these cruises Europe was nearly depopulated; and it was nothing else but want of men and money, which made Rome desist from the mad attempt of driving the Turks out of the Holy Land. This judgement upon Rome did not end, until they had no more men to send on these expeditions; because they had sent all they could send, and all they had sent had died in the sea.

That all the countries in the empire were depopulated by the cruises, Sigonius asserts, *De regno Italiæ*, lib. ix. page 235. "Ex toto occidente principes, populi que adeo frequentes ierunt, ut crederes vulgo urbes ab incolis deferi agrosque incultos solosque deferi."

The history of the cruises is so generally and so fully known, that it is unnecessary for me to transcribe any part of it in proof of the above facts. And indeed it is so long, that it would make a large volume by itself. But if any of my readers are ignorant of these events, they may see them stated at great length by Sigonius, *De Regno Italiæ*, lib. ix. pages 234, 235. by Mosheim, vol. i. pages 467,—475. from 556,—561. from 622,—626. and in the whole of Le Abbe de Vertot's history of the Knights of Malta.

Verses

Verses 4th,—7th.—And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus: for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgements.

This third vial was poured out upon the rivers and fountains of waters, and it became blood. It is evident from the original, that it was the judgement which was poured out of the vial that became blood, and not the rivers into which it was poured. The blood in this, as in the former vial, signifies the shedding of much blood. In the former, blood was poured into the sea; but in this it is poured into the rivers and fountains of water.

The rivers and fountains of water, as distinguished from the sea in the symbolical language, signify the internal ways of intercourse among the citizens of the same kingdom. When fountains of water are joined with rivers, they signify not only those internal ways of communication, but

also the sources from which these proceed. The internal ways of intercourse mentioned in this passage, must be those of the citizens of Papal Rome; for all the vials are poured out upon some one part or other of that empire, as represented by the *earth* in verse 1st. That they are the citizens of Papal Rome, is farther evident from the cause which is assigned, in verse 6th, for giving them blood to drink; "for they have shed the blood of "faints and prophets." The shedding the blood of faints and prophets is one of the most prominent features of Papal Rome, as her picture is drawn both in this book, and in the history of the many persecutions in which she hath shed, in such deluges, the blood of those who adhered to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus. In chap. xvii. 6. it is said of Papal Rome, "I saw "the woman drunken with the blood of the "faints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus;" and in chap. xviii. 24. "and in her was "found the blood of prophets and of faints."

This judgement of blood, therefore, upon the rivers and fountains of water, must be the spilling of much blood of the votaries of Papal Rome in civil wars and contests, which take their rise from the two fountains of all intercourse among the citizens of Rome. These fountains, it is well known, are the civil and ecclesiastic powers in harmony. The civil wars, therefore, predicted by blood poured

not only into the rivers but also into the fountains of waters, must be such as having taken their rise from a difference and bloody contest between the civil and ecclesiastic powers of the empire, descend to, and spread war and bloodshed among all the citizens.

The preceding vial brought us down to the thirteenth century. In that century, therefore, we may expect to find the commencement of the judgement predicted under this third vial. If we look into the history of Rome, about the middle of the thirteenth century, we shall find the most exact accomplishment of this prediction, in the civil wars which, for near a hundred years, deluged Italy in blood: Wars too, which took their rise from a struggle for power between the Popes and the emperors, the ecclesiastic and the civil powers of the empire. The source of these civil wars is to be traced back to the eleventh century, in the famous contests, which then began between Pope Gregory VII. and Henry IV. emperor of Germany, about *investitures*. The emperor claimed the right of investiture, that is of presenting to bishopricks and ecclesiastic preferments, by delivering to the person presented the ring and crozier, the insignia of investiture, as belonging to the regalia, or prerogative of the crown. On the other hand, the Pope claimed it as an unquestionable part of the pontifical authority. The contest ran so high between

between them, that the emperor called a council, which, at his instigation, deposed the Pope. The Pope, enraged at the sentence, excommunicated the emperor. They afterwards declared war against each other. The emperor besieged Rome itself, and made himself master of a part of the city; and the Pope was obliged to fly for safety. The same contest was carried on by succeeding Popes and emperors, and much blood was shed on both sides. Thus the judgement originated, and became blood in the fountains of waters, in the source of the civil and ecclesiastic powers of the empire.

These contests between the emperors and Popes, as was naturally to be expected, spread their contagion among all the citizens of Rome, and enkindled the most violent and bloody civil war in Italy, that was ever known in any country for so great a length of time. The two parties, in this war, were distinguished by the names of Guelphs and Gibellines. The former were the Papal, and the latter, the imperial party. This civil war began in the year of Christ 1258, and continued for near a century. During that time cities, villages, and even families, were keenly engaged against each other; and the confusion, cruelty, and bloodshed, which abounded during that time, is shocking to humanity. Pope Boniface VIII. by persecuting the Gibellines, and the illustrious family

mily of Colonna, inflamed the parties against each other. The Pope was taken prisoner by the Gibellines, and soon died of a wound he had received in his head, and of grief of mind for his defeat. Pope Clement V. not finding himself safe in Italy, retired with his cardinals in the year 1305 to Avignon in France, where he and his successors held their court, for above seventy years. This period the Italians call, by way of derision, the Babylonish captivity. For all this time the Guelphs and Gibellines made war on each other, and Rome was in the greatest confusion. For a considerable time, the city of Rome itself was divided between the contending parties; and each defended by force the part which they possessed. The Colonnas, at the head of the Gibellines, seized on the Lateran, the Amphitheatre, and other principal places of the city. John, brother to the king of Naples, at the head of the Guelphs, possessed himself of the capitol, castle St Angelo, the Mole of Adrian, and the Vatican.

Platina represents the Italians, in every place, thirsting after each others blood. *Vita Bonifacii*, VIII. pages 231, 233. “Intestina mala quæ quotidie, cum magna hominum cæde, in unaquaque civitate, in quo vis parvo etiam castello commitebantur, cædebantur cives, necabantur senes, allidebantur infantes, nec ullus crudelitatis modulus aberat.” That is, “Such were the intestine
“ evils,

“ evils, which were committed daily, with great
 “ slaughter of men : In every state, even in every
 “ little castle, the citizens were slain, the old men
 “ were massacred, the infants were dashed to
 “ pieces, nor was any kind of cruelty wanting.”

In the massacre in Sicily, commonly called the Sicilian vespers, A. D. 1282, the French were murdered throughout the whole island. They massacred them at the very altars, they ripped up the women with child, and dashed out the childrens brains against the stones. Eight thousand were murdered in two hours, and they spared the life only of one single person. For the history of this, consult *Mezeray Hist. de France*, Vol. i. page 674.

All those facts, and many more of the same kind, relative to these bloody civil wars in Italy in this period, may be seen at great length, in *Heis. hist. de l'Empire*, vol. i. pages 270,—325. Platina in *vita Bonifacii VIII.* pages 231,—233. *Mosheim.* vol. i. centuries 13, and 14, and Sigonius *de regno Italiæ*, pages 92,—125. These passages are too many and too large for being transcribed into this commentary. I shall therefore, transcribe only one short passage from *Mosheim*, a Lutheran ecclesiastic historian, justly of very high character, and one from Sigonius, a Roman catholic civil historian, also of high character. From which it shall appear that these two historians agree in their
 accounts

accounts of the bloody civil wars in Italy, by the Guelphs and Gibellines; and in fixing the commencement of them to about the middle of the thirteenth century, the time which corresponds to this third vial.

Mosheim, vol. i. cent. 13, page 648, speaking of the Emperor Frederic, says that he died in Apulia the 13th December 1250; and then adds “upon the death of this formidable and magnanimous adversary, Innocent returned to Italy; hoping now to enjoy, with security, the fruits of his ambition. It was principally from this period, that the two famous factions called Guelphs and Gibellines, of which the latter espoused the cause of the emperors, and the former that of the pontiffs, involved all the Italian states in the most fatal dissensions, though their origin is much earlier than this century.”

Sigonius *de regno Italiæ*, page 92, opposite to the year 1258, marked on the margin, thus writes, “Quinetiam Bononiæ pestifer ille seditionis morbus, quem civitas jampridem occulte contraxerat, palam erupit. Namque aliquot ante annis, ex variis cædibus mutuo perpetratis, alienari ac disjungi multarum familiarum sensim animi cæperant; quæ, procedente tempore cum, inimicos suos, opibus ulcisci separatis non possent, vires inter se, ac patrandarum rerum consilia contulerant: atque in duas factiones secretæ, qua-

“rum una ecclesiæ, altera imperii partes, more
“accepto in Italiam, suo ceperat, hoc anno abdi-
“tam et tamdiu conceptam odiorum flammam
“evomuerunt; quippe contractis propinquorum ac
“clientum suorum viribus arma inter se contule-
“runt, ac magna cæde utrique facta, et civili fan-
“guine urbe imbuta, tranquillum statum reipub-
“licæ, in omnes annos, qui consecuti sunt, per-
“turbarunt. Neque enim hoc loco libido stetit,
“sed nullis coercita frenis in dies ad asperiora atque
“iniquiora processit.” That is, “Moreover that
“infectious disease of sedition, which the state
“had long ago contracted secretly, broke out
“openly at the city of Bononia. For the minds
“of many families had begun to be separated and
“alienated by mutual slaughters committed upon
“each other for some years before; who, when in
“process of time, they could not be revenged on
“their enemies by their separate powers, collected
“together their strength, and their deliberations
“for carrying on their affairs; and having separat-
“ed into two factions, the one of which, accord-
“ing to the established custom, supported the party
“of the church, and the other that of the empire,
“they in this year (viz. 1258) vomited out upon
“Italy that flame of hatreds which had been so
“long enkindled, but concealed. For having col-
“lected together the forces of their neighbours
“and clients, they took up arms among them-
“selves

“ selves, and having made great slaughter on both
“ sides, and having stained the city with the blood
“ of citizens, they disturbed the peace of the state
“ for all the years that have followed. Nor did
“ their rage stop in this place, but being restrained
“ by no bridles, it daily rushed forward to actions
“ more cruel and injurious.”

Here we may observe, that a Roman Catholic historian of high character fixes the commencement of these civil wars in Italy to the year 1258, the very time to which history leads us to look for the commencement of the judgement predicted in the third vial. And also, that he describes this judgement in plain language, in terms of the very same import with those symbolical ones in which it is predicted in the prophecy. The prediction says, that this vial became blood in the rivers and fountains of waters. Sigonius says, “ that the one
“ faction supported the claims of the church, and
“ the other those of the empire ; that there was
“ much slaughter on both sides, and that the city
“ was stained with the blood of citizens.” When he says that they disturbed the peace of the city for all the *years* that have *followed*, he means all the years which have followed in his history of Italy, which he brings down only to the year 1286; at which time, these civil wars, not ended, were still going forward to actions more cruel and injurious.

On this judgement the prophet makes two observations. 1st, That it displays in a striking manner the righteousness, the omniscience, and omnipresence of God, in his providential government of the world. "Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus: for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy." God is present at all times and in all places, and he is ever the supreme Lord of the universe; as the Judge of all the earth he ever does that which is right. This judgement upon Papal Rome, so exactly fitted to their crime, displays at once his perfect knowledge of their character, and his impartial justice. He gives them blood to drink for shedding the blood, not of criminals, but of saints, holy men; not of impostors, but of prophets of God who preached to men only what God himself had revealed. Rome had long been distinguished for shedding the blood of the saints of God, whom she blasphemously called heretics. But, in the end of the 12th century, and in this 13th century, she went far beyond all her former bounds, in deluging the world with the blood of saints. The chief zeal of the church of Rome in these times consisted, in putting to death, in the most cruel manner they could invent, those whom they called heretics. The persecution of the Albigenses

bigeneses and Waldenses in the 13th century, was the most bloody one that ever disgraced the history of superstition. When the town of Beziers was taken, above 60,000 of them were put to the sword at once. And as if all the other methods of persecution known in the church of Rome in former ages had been too few or too mild, the infernal court of the inquisition was invented, and established in the beginning of the 13th century, by Pope Innocent III. and Father Dominic was made inquisitor about the year 1216. Of these facts the reader may satisfy himself fully, by consulting Mosheim and Dupin on the 13th century, Limborch on the history of the Inquisition, and especially Jo. Paul Perrin *Hist. de Vaudois*. Since they had shed so much blood of men, against whom they could prove no crime, against whom they could allege nothing, but a contempt of those articles of faith and modes of worship which were inconsistent with the word of God; was it not a striking display of the perfect knowledge which God had of the conduct and character of these men, of his presence at all times and in all places, of his superintendency of the world, and of the exactness of his justice; when those men who had shed the blood of saints were made to shed the guilty blood of one another, in a profusion to be equalled only by that deluge of the blood of saints which they had shed with wicked hands?

And

And 2d, That it is a striking proof of the truth of God in performing his promises, and of his power in doing so in spite of all opposition. This observation is contained in verse 7th, "And I heard
" another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God
" Almighty, true and righteous are thy judge-
" ments." What is said out of the altar, refers to a promise which God made to the souls under the altar, chap. vi. 9,—11. The judgements inflicted on Papal Rome under this vial, are a part of those judgements promised to the martyrs under the fifth seal, who suffered under Heathen Rome; and hence, in reference to that promise they are called true; that is proofs of the truth of God in performing his promises to his people.

The promise is thus expressed in that passage:
" And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw
" under the *altar* the souls of them that were
" slain for the word of God, and for the testimony
" which they held. And they cried with a loud
" voice, saying, How long, O Lord holy and *true*,
" dost thou not judge and avenge our *blood* on
" them that dwell on the *earth*. And white robes
" were given to every one of them, and it was said
" unto them that they should rest yet for a little
" season, until their fellow servants also and their
" brethren that should be killed as they were,
" should be fulfilled." This judgement, as being a part of the accomplishment of that promise, is
here

here filed not only righteous, as in the preceding observation, but also true. The angel from the altar not only addresses God as the Lord of the universe, but also as God the only proper object of religious worship, and as the Almighty. It is thus intimated to us, that the natural tendency of this and the subsequent judgements upon Rome, under the four following vials, which were promised to them under the altar who were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, and the final effect of them, shall be to prove to the world the idolatry of those who worship the beast and his image; the truth of the religion of those who worship God only; the weakness of the beast, notwithstanding the great things which he speaketh; and the omnipotence of the God in whom Christians trust; when he can so easily make their most powerful enemies punish and destroy themselves; when they become at once the criminals and the executioners, and when in the very time he hath promised to his votaries, he shall completely overthrow all their enemies.

It will be proper to observe here, that though this and many other judgements have been inflicted on Papal Rome for shedding the blood of saints, and though many more for the same cause shall be brought upon that empire, which shall appear as we proceed, yet Christians themselves are never the instruments, even under God, in inflicting these

these judgements. The weapons of the Christian's warfare are not carnal, but spiritual. The followers of the Prince of peace dare use no other sword, either in propagating the gospel of peace, or in repelling their spiritual enemies, than the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. They remember, that when Peter in a singularly trying case, which could never occur again, drew his sword to strike the enemies of Christ, Jesus said unto him, "Put up thy sword unto his place, for all they who take the sword shall perish with the sword." They dare not prove themselves the successors of Peter, by drawing their swords in support of Christ's kingdom, fully convinced that all who do so shall finally perish with the sword, for not a word of that Jesus who is the truth shall fall to the ground unaccomplished. True Christians pity, forgive, and pray for their enemies. Of this forgiving temper, they will not revenge the blood of their brethren on their persecutors by shedding their blood, when at any time they are possessed of superior power. To suppose, that without repentment they would shed the blood of their enemies in cold blood, indeed, would be to suppose them monsters of iniquity, not men, much less Christians. Besides, should they be used as instruments in the hand of providence in shedding the blood of their enemies, much of their own blood, without a great miracle,

cle, must be shed in the very act of punishing them. There never was a war, either foreign or civil, in which blood was not shed on both sides, and in which even the conquerors did not feel many of the direful calamities of war. The God whom Christians serve has no need, either to make Christians themselves the instruments of punishing their enemies, or of working miracles for that purpose. Since the fall of man, there are, alas! abundance of wicked men in the world to be the voluntary instruments in the hand of God, for mutually punishing each other for their wickedness. Without any restraint upon their liberty as moral agents, they with wicked hands inflict those judgements which are according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

It is thus, without man's feeling, knowing, or intending it, that God makes the wrath of man to praise him, and, in due time, restrains the remainder of his wrath. Accordingly, in fact, the Mahometans, and the votaries of Rome punished each other under the sixth trumpet, chap. ix. 13,—21, and under the second vial in verse 3. of this chapter. And under this third vial the votaries of Rome punished each other for shedding the blood of the saints and prophets of God. And it shall be shewn, under vials sixth, and seventh, that, in the last war, in which Papal Rome shall be completely overthrown, the Turks and the vota-

ries of Rome shall mutually punish and 'destroy each other.

Verses 8th, 9th.—And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

This judgement is poured out upon the sun, and the sun becomes the instrument of scorching men with fire. In the symbolical language, as was formerly shewn, the sun in any particular kingdom, which is the subject of discourse, signifies something which stands in a relation to that kingdom, similar to that in which the sun stands to the other parts of the solar system. The natural sun is the center of gravity, of motion, of light, and of heat, to all the other parts of the system. Hence, in the kingdom of heaven or church of Christ, Jesus Christ is called the sun; and his ministers stars; because he is the center and source of knowledge, spiritual life, and support to his church. But the kingdom, which is the subject of discourse in this whole chapter of the seven vials, is, as is evident from verse 1. the earth, that is the
Papal

Papal Roman empire. The sun, therefore, in this place must signify the center and source of knowledge, support, and life in the Papal hierarchy. It must be the infallible head of the Romish church. It is well known, that the members of this church say that they have an infallible head on earth : But to those acquainted with the history of this church it is well known that the votaries of that church have not been able to agree among themselves, who is this head, Some of them say it is the Pope, some a general council, and others a general council with a Pope at their head. On this difference of opinion about the infallible head of controversy, Archbishop Tillotson, in one of his sermons says, “ I had as well have no infallible head of controversy, as not know where to “ find him, when I stand in need of him.” Indeed, when men, in matters of religion deviate from the truth and simplicity of divine revelation, it is no wonder that they fall into doubts and errors about almost every thing. If men, who are favoured with the inspired scriptures of the old and new testament, will not receive Jesus Christ as the infallible head of the Christian church, it is no wonder that they should be unable to agree about any other for its head. Since this false sun is not of God’s making ; and since those, who say they have such a sun in their system, have not been able to agree among themselves who he is, we are not to

suppose that the spirit of God, will settle the impious controversy for them.

By the sun here, therefore, we are to understand all those, in whom all these three parties in the church of Rome have placed infallibility, *viz.* the Pope, general councils, and general councils with a Pope at their head. Upon all these this vial was to be poured, and these were to scorch *men* with great heat.

In this book, men as opposed to saints signify the subjects of the earth, or the Roman empire. Whenever the rays of the sun become too many and strong, instead of affording to men that light and heat, which are pleasant and beneficial, they hinder them from seeing clearly, and they scorch, torment, and hurt them. In such a situation, rays so uncommonly luminous and hot, dazzle, weaken, and torment the organ of sight.

In warm Asiatic climes, such as that in which this book was first published, scarcely any thing can be more painful or destructive than the scorching rays of the sun. In some hot seasons, this pain is felt to a very high degree, even in our temperate zone. Hence, during the period to which this vial refers, such should be the state of the Popes, the general councils, and of the general councils with Popes at their heads, that the votaries of Rome should be unable to know what or whom to believe, and should be darkened and tormented,

mented, by those parts of the system of their hierarchy, from which they expected information, support, and comfort.

As this prediction refers to such a state of all these three parts of the Papal hierarchy, to which infallibility hath been ascribed, it is more improbable, in the ordinary course of things, that they should all three fall into the same state, at the same period of time, than that one of them only should do so. Hence, if in the history of the period, to which this prediction refers, it shall be found that such, in fact, hath been the state of all the three, so much stronger must the proof from history be that these events are the very ones, which were predicted by this fourth vial: It is reasonable to conclude, that when such disorder, confusion, and darkness, should overspread all those, whom the votaries of the Romish church regarded as infallible guides, that they would no longer follow them implicitly, but begin to think for themselves, and to search these scriptures which are every way fit to make the man of God perfect. But the prophecy informs us that this was not to be the case; but that they should blaspheme the name of God on account of these plagues, and should not repent. Even when the state of their Popes and councils was such as might fully convince every unprejudiced person, that they had
nothing

nothing of infallibility about them, these deluded men should still yield to them implicit faith.

As the events predicted in the third vial brought us in the history of Rome down to near the end of the 14th century, we may expect to find those which relate to this fourth vial in the end of it and in the fifteenth century. Accordingly, in fact, we find a most exact and striking accomplishment of this judgement in the schism of the Popes, known by the name of the great Western schism. This schism commenced upon the death of Gregory XI. which happened in the year 1378. When the cardinals were assembled at Rome to choose a successor to him, the people of Rome, fearing that the vacant dignity might be conferred on a Frenchman, came in a tumultuous manner to the Conclave, and with great clamours and many outrageous threatenings, insisted that an Italian should be advanced to the popedom. The cardinals terrified by this mob, immediately proclaimed Urban VI. Pope. Soon after the cardinals withdrew from Rome to Anagni, and from thence to Fondi, a city in the kingdom of Naples, where they elected Clement VII. Pope, and declared, at the same time, that the election of Urban was nothing more than a mere ceremony, which they had found themselves obliged to perform, in order to calm the turbulent rage of the populace. Urban remained at Rome. Clement went to Avignon in France :

France : His cause was espoused by France, Spain, Scotland, Sicily, and Cyprus ; while all the rest of Europe acknowledged Urban to be the true vicar of Christ. On the death of Urban VI. at Rome, A. D. 1389, Boniface IX. was chosen his successor there. Clement VII. died, A. D. 1394, and Benedict XIII. succeeded him at Avignon. During these transactions, various methods were proposed and attempted for healing this melancholy breach in the church, Kings, princes, and bishops appeared with zeal in this salutary project, but all in vain. They tried in vain by intreaties and threatenings to make both Popes give up the pontificate, that one acceptable to both parties might be chosen. The Galican church, highly incensed at this obstinacy, in a council held at Paris, A. D. 1397, solemnly renounced all subjection and obedience to both pontiffs ; and upon the publication of this resolution A. D. 1398, Benedict XIII. was by the express orders of Charles VI. detained prisoner in his palace at Avignon.

This schism continued for above half a century. During that time, it was decreed in the council of Constance A. D. 1414 that the Pope is inferior and subject to a general assembly of the universal church ; and the authority of councils was vindicated and maintained in the fourth and fifth sessions of this council. For a long time, there were two Popes at the same time in different and opposite

opposite lines; the one of whom had his seat at Rome, and the other at Avignon. For some time there were three opposite Popes, and as many opposite councils; viz. Benedict XIII. Gregory XII. and Alexander V. and the councils at Pisa, Perpignan, and Austria. The council of Constance deposed both Pope John XXIII. and Pope Benedict XIII. The general council of Florence with Pope Eugenius IV. at their head, and the general council of Basil with Pope Felix V. at their head, met at the same time in opposition to each other, and excommunicated each other.

For these important facts the reader is desired to consult Dupin on centuries 14th and 15th, and Mosheim on said centuries, particularly in Vol. i. pages 728,—730. and 779,—783. For the information of those of my readers who have not an opportunity of consulting these historians, I shall here transcribe three short passages from the last of them.

Page 728. “ Thus the union of the Latin church,
 “ under one head, was destroyed at the death of
 “ Gregory XI, and was succeeded by that deplo-
 “ rable dissention, commonly known by the name
 “ of the great Western schism. This dissention
 “ was fomented with such dreadful success, and a-
 “ rose to such a shameful height, that for the space
 “ of fifty years, the church had two or three dif-
 “ ferent heads at the same time; each of the con-
 “ tending

“ tending Popes forming plots, and thundering
 “ out anathemas against their competitors. The
 “ distress and calamity of these times is beyond all
 “ power of description ; for not to insist upon the
 “ perpetual contentions and wars between the fac-
 “ tions of the several Popes, by which multitudes
 “ lost their fortunes and lives, all sense of religion
 “ was extinguished in most places, and profligacy
 “ rose to a most scandalous excess. The clergy,
 “ while they vehemently contended which of the
 “ reigning Popes was the true successor of Christ,
 “ were so excessively corrupt, as to be no longer
 “ studious to keep up even an appearance of reli-
 “ gion or decency : And in consequence of this,
 “ many plain well meaning people, who conclud-
 “ ed that no one could possibly partake of eternal
 “ life, unless united with the vicar of Christ, were
 “ overwhelmed with doubt, and plunged into the
 “ deepest distress of mind.”

Page 770. “ Thus was the Christian church di-
 “ vided into three great factions ; and its govern-
 “ ment violently carried on by three contending
 “ chiefs, who loaded each other with reciprocal
 “ maledictions, calumnies, and excommunications.

Page 782. “ Be that as it may, there was little
 “ done at Ferrara, where matters were carried on
 “ too slowly to afford any prospect of an end of
 “ their dissensions ; but the negotiations were more
 “ successful at Florence, whether Eugenius re-

“ moved the council about the beginning of the
“ year 1439, on account of the plague, which
“ broke out at Ferrara. On the other hand, the
“ council of Basil, exasperated by the imperious
“ proceedings of Eugenius, deposed him from the
“ Papacy on the 25th of June, in the year 1439,
“ which vigorous measure was not approved of by
“ the European kings and princes. It may be
“ easily conceived what an impresson this step
“ made upon the affronted pontiff. He lost all
“ patience ; and devoted, for the second time, to
“ hell and damnation the members of the council
“ of Basil, by a solemn and most severe edict, in
“ which also he declared all their acts null, and
“ all their proceedings unlawful. This new peal
“ of Papal thunder was held in derision by the
“ council of Basil, who persisting in their purpose,
“ elected another pontiff, and raised to that high
“ dignity Amadeus duke of Savoy, who then lived
“ in the most profound solitude at a delicious re-
“ treat, called Ripaille, upon the borders of the
“ Lemane lake, and who is known in the Papal list
“ by the name of Felix V. This election was the
“ occasion of the revival of that deplorable schism,
“ which had formerly rent the church, and which
“ had been terminated with so much difficulty,
“ and after so many vain and fruitless efforts, at
“ the council of Constance. Nay, the new breach
“ was still more lamentable than the former one,

“ as

“ as the flame was kindled not only between two
“ rival pontiffs; but also between the two con-
“ tending councils of Basil and Florence.”

Can words form a more exact comment on this vial, than that last sentence of Mosheim is? What candid and intelligent person can compare these historical facts with the judgement predicted in the fourth vial, and not perceive their exact agreement? Who can believe these facts, and at the same time, believe the infallibility of Popes, of councils, or of councils with Popes at their head? Is it not then surprising, that the western schism did not totally destroy all that implicit faith, which the votaries of Rome place in her infallible head? But let us remember that their adherence to Rome, after this schism, is another part of their history which fulfills this prophecy, for the men who were scorched by the heat of the sun, still blasphemed the name of God, and they repented not, to give him glory.

Verses 10th, 11th.—And the fifth angel poured his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

This fifth vial was poured out, upon the seat of the beast. The word in the original, which is translated seat, is *θρονος*, which signifies a *throne*, and is the very word from which our English word *throne* is derived. The word, throne, occurs no less than twenty seven times in our English translation of this book of Revelation, and in every one of these places *θρονος* is the word, which is used in the original. Ought it not therefore to be translated throne, in this passage also, which is its proper meaning.

In the symbolical language, throne signifies supreme and sovereign power, because it is the seat, upon which kings sit in state. The symbol is so natural, that not only in prophetic, but also in common language, throne is used as an elegant metaphor for sovereign power. To approach the throne, to address the throne, to petition the throne are the common terms for approaching, addressing, or petitioning the king, in the character of the sovereign of the state. In this sense, it is also frequently used in scripture. Thus Pharaoh reserving to himself only the prerogatives of the crown, above those high powers with which he had vested Joseph as governor over all Egypt, says to him, Gen. xli. 40, “only in the *throne* will I be greater than thou.” Thus in 2 Sam. iii. 10. to set up the throne of David over all Israel, is to raise David to be king over Israel. “To translate
“ the

“ the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set
 “ up the *throne* of David over Israel, and over Ju-
 “ dah from Dan even to Beerſheba.”

And his kingdom was full of darkneſs. In the original that claufe is thus expreſſed, *καὶ γένητο ἡ βασιλεία αὐτῆς ἐσκοτωμένη*, which ſignifies that his kingdom was obſcured or eclipsed. The degree of an eclipse may be greater or ſmaller, and it may increaſe, until the eclipse becomes total. From the conſtruction of the Greek language, it ſeems to be ſignified that this obſcurity and eclipse, begun under this vial, but not perfected under it, ſhall go on increaſing until it ſhall become total. Hence, the plain meaning of this hieroglyphic is, that the fifth judgement, which ſhall be inflicted on Papal Rome, ſhall fall on the ſovereign power of the hierarchy; and ſhall greatly obſcure and reſtrain that power, and gradually increaſe, until it ſhall totally eclipse and deſtroy the ſovereignty of Rome. But notwithstanding this great diminution of power, many of thoſe votaries, who had long adored Rome as ſupreme head over the whole weſtern kingdoms, both in ſpiritual and temporal affairs, ſhall ſtill adhere to her, even when fact fully diſproves her claim to univerſality and ſupremacy in both.

“ For they repented not of their deeds.” But, though they repented not, they were exceſſively vexed by this judgement, and they gnawed their
 tongues

tongues for pain, and even blasphemed God. The peculiar appellation which is here given to God, merits our particular attention.

“ They blasphemed the God of *heaven*.” Heaven, in the symbolical language, and in this book, signifies the true church of Christ. The God of heaven, therefore signifies that God whom true Christians believe, worship, and obey; and who protects and governs the Christian church. Under the preceding vial, it is said, “ they blasphemed the name of God,” that is, they blasphemed the Divine perfections exerted in the government of the world; because the judgements under that vial were of such a nature, that the Popes, councils, and votaries of Rome themselves, were the only visible instruments in inflicting them, and true Christians did not appear in them at all. But the judgements predicted in this vial, are of such a nature, that the church of Rome shall attribute them to true Christians, whom they call heretics; and therefore shall blaspheme the God whom these heretics worship.

The fourth vial brought us down to near the end of the fifteenth century, it is therefore probable, that the commencement of this one will be found in the beginning of the sixteenth century. In the history of Rome at this period, great events, which accomplish the predictions in this vial, rush upon us; even those, which, under Divine providence,

vidence, ushered in and accomplished the glorious Reformation in the sixteenth century. Before this period, the power of Papal Rome was very great. The Pope claimed, and very frequently with effect exerted a supreme power both in spiritual and temporal affairs, over all the kings and subjects in all the different countries, unto which the western empire had been parcelled out. With a despotic sway, he interdicted whole kingdoms, excommunicated and deposed emperors and kings, and raised up others in their places. In the thirteenth century, this supremacy and despotism of the Popes rose to a most enormous height.

Of Innocent III. *Mosheim*, cent xiii. vol. i. page 642. thus writes, "Innocent III. who remained at the head of the church until the year 1216, followed the steps of Gregory VII. and not only usurped the despotic government of the church, but also claimed the empire of the world; and thought of nothing less than subjecting the kings and princes of the earth to his lordly sceptre.—In Asia and Europe he disposed of crowns and sceptres with the most wanton ambition."

In that and the following pages, *Mosheim* enumerates many kings and emperors whom he excommunicated and deposed, and others whom he raised to imperial and regal dignities. Even England, with all its innate and boasted courage, trembled

bled as a most abject slave before the tyrannic Popes. Innocent III. laid all England under an interdict, excommunicated King John, absolved all his subjects from their oath of allegiance, and in the year 1212 deposed him, declared the throne of England vacant, and wrote to Philip Augustus king of France to take possession of it, and unite it to his own dominions.

Roused by the arrogance, ambition, and despotism of the Popes, the dissipation and wickedness of the clergy, and above all by the preaching and proclaiming by John Tetcel those famous indulgences of Leo X. which administered remission of all sins past, present, and to come, however enormous their nature, to all who were rich enough to purchase them, that most extraordinary man Martin Luther rose up to resist the impiety and despotism of the Popes, in the year 1517. About the same time, Melancthon, Zuingle, Carlostad, and the great Calvin, were all raised up by divine providence to promote the Reformation. These illustrious names must ever be dear to every friend of learning, liberty, and religion ; for to them under God we are indebted for these inestimable blessings. Many princes were raised up to support the Reformation, who, with their counsels and their arms combated the tyranny of Rome.

On the 10th Decr. 1520, Luther publicly renounced his subjection to Rome, and in the presence

fence of a prodigious number of people, burned the decretals and canons relating to the Pope's supreme jurisdiction, on a large pile of burning wood erected for that purpose.

The Elector of Saxony, the Landgrave of Hesse, and other German princes who were friendly to the Reformation, and members of the second diet of Spire, protested against the decree of that diet on the 19th April 1529; from which fact and time the Reformers got the name of *Protestants*.

On the 25th Sept. 1555, the Protestants were solemnly exempted from the jurisdiction of the church of Rome; secured in liberty of conscience in all matters relating to religion; and the Reformed churches were established by the acts of the diet of Augsbург.

The Reformation forms so great and illustrious an æra in the history of the church, and of all the European kingdoms, and the above facts relative to it are of so public and important a nature, that they are recorded by all the civil and ecclesiastical historians of that period.

The Reformation thus begun, went on, and still goes forward. The kingdoms of England, Scotland, Ireland, Sweden, and Denmark, many German states, and cantons of Switzerland, Holland, and great numbers of individuals in France, Hungary, and Bohemia, separated from the Roman commu-

nion, absolutely renounced the Papal authority, and firmly adhered to the Reformation. The Reformation not only separated whole kingdoms from the jurisdiction of Rome, but also greatly weakened her authority in those kingdoms which still adhere to the Papal hierarchy. The Pope dares not now issue out his excommunications against princes of the Roman Catholic persuasion. He dares not now depose them from their thrones, and absolve their subjects from their allegiance. Is not this then a great judgement upon the sovereignty of Rome? Is not her supreme power greatly obscured and restrained? Is not this, then, an exact accomplishment of the judgement predicted under the fifth vial?

Though many kingdoms have abandoned Rome; yet that many still adhere to her, are grieved for the Reformation, and blaspheme Protestants as heretics, and the God whom they worship, is a farther completion of the prophecy. "For
" they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of *heaven* because of their
" pains and their sores, and repented not of their
" deeds."

This vial reaches down to the present day, and will reach down to the commencement of the sixth vial, which probably will be about the year 1998. The power of Rome has been gradually diminishing since the Reformation, and will go on diminishing

minishing in the course of divine providence by the progress of learning, commerce, and civil and religious liberty, in the world, until the time of the sixth vial, when it shall receive another violent shock. Other kingdoms shall abandon Rome before the period of this vial shall be closed; and over those few who shall adhere to her to the last, her despotic power shall be greatly diminished.

The art of Printing, discovered a little before the time of the Reformation, hath provided so excellent a mean for rendering the attainment and preservation of knowledge practicable, certain, and cheap; the great extent of commerce in the world affords so easy and unsuspected a way of diffusing knowledge, liberty, and pure religion, through the world, that Papal superstition gradually loses its hold even of the votaries of Rome; and they, as is commonly the case with men, change their religion before they dare change its name. In the same way, only with an accelerated motion, matters will go on. Even in Popish countries, men will feel themselves, and men will think for themselves. Popish kingdoms will feel their own greatness, power, and independence; and will despise the empty threats of a power inferior to their own, though they should be thundered from the Papal throne. So heterogeneous is the Papal kingdom to all others, that in proportion as light and liberty spread through the

world, this kingdom shall be full of darkness, as predicted in this vial.

The next vial introduces us into those prophecies, which, respecting times yet at a considerable distance, are not accomplished.—Before entering on those, let it be observed, that all the five events which have been produced from authentic history as accomplishments of the five predictions already considered, are of a magnitude worthy of prophecy, and exactly correspond to their respective predictions, in their natures, in all their circumstances, and in their times; that they are all great judgements upon Papal Rome; and that they are all facts of such great and important natures, and of such public notoriety, that there cannot be any misrepresentation of their natures or times. What person is there in any tolerable degree acquainted with history, who hath not heard of the contests for power between the emperors and Popes, in the 8th, 9th, and 10th centuries; of the Croisades or holy wars; of the civil wars of the Guelphs and Gibellines; of the great Western schism; and of the glorious Reformation from Popery? Who is there who does not know that these great events followed each other in the order just now mentioned? Who, that knows what a judgement is, can doubt, that every one of these was a great judgement upon Papal Rome?

Verses

Verses 12th,—16th.—And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place, called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon.

This sixth vial is to be poured out upon the great river Euphrates. Euphrates is here used not literally but symbolically, like all the other places upon which all the other vials in this chain of predictions are poured. Euphrates the great, signifies something which bears the same relation to Babylon the great or Papal Rome which the river Euphrates bore to antient Babylon. A
branch

branch of the Euphrates ran through the antient city of Babylon. After Cyrus had besieged it in vain for near two years, he at last made a lake a little above the town of Babylon, into which he could turn the river and dry up its channel. While Belshazzar, his nobles, and his soldiers were rioting in the impious feast mentioned in Daniel chap. v. Cyrus opened a sluice, emptied the Euphrates into the lake, laid its channel dry in the night time, and having separated his army into two divisions, the one entering the town on the one side, and the other on the other, along the dry channel, surprized the king, his nobles, and his forces rioting in drunkenness; killed the king, took the city, and finally overthrew both the city and kingdom of Babylon. So long as the Euphrates flowed in its usual channel, Babylon was impregnable, but as soon as that river was dried up, that city was taken and totally destroyed.

By the Euphrates, therefore, we are here to understand that barrier, be it what it will, which has hitherto rendered Papal Rome impregnable; whether it be that superstition, which has hitherto kept the western kings from attacking Rome, or whether it be the Adriatic sea or gulph of Venice which, as a kind of natural barrier, has defended her from the Turks, who live on the east side of it, or whatever it is, which has hitherto been the defence of Rome. The effect of this vial shall be

to

to remove that barrier. Superstition shall then no longer make men dread to attack Rome, as they would do to commit sacrilege. And the Turks shall pass over the gulph of Venice. By their skill in navigation, they shall pass over it, as easily as if it were dried up.

The drying up of the Euphrates, signifies that this attack upon Rome like that upon Babylon, when that river was dried up, shall be fatal and final; that the city and empire of Rome shall be overthrown forever, never more to be ranked among the cities and kingdoms of the world. At this time Rome is to be attacked by many powerful enemies; and she is to collect all her own forces and those of her allies, and to make a last effort for her expiring kingdom; the war is to be violent and bloody, and she is to be finally overcome.

The following shall be the parties in that war; on the one side the Pope with his Italian subjects, and all the kings in Europe, who shall be still Roman catholic: These will then be very few. And on the other side probably some of the protestant kingdoms of Europe, and certainly the Turks in great numbers.

That these shall be the parties, is evident from the terms of this prediction. The Pope and all the other members of the hierarchy shall send emissaries to collect all their forces and allies to this war. These emissaries are styled three unclean spirits

spirits like frogs. One of them shall proceed from the Dragon, that is the Devil. That fiend, seeing his kingdom in this world near its overthrow, shall exert himself to the utmost, to blind many with error, superstition, and false zeal, so as to make them fight for Rome to the last. Another of them shall come out of the mouth of the beast ; every part of the hierarchy shall exert itself in collecting forces to this war. And the third shall come out of the mouth of the false prophet. The false prophet signifies the Pope individually. This is the first time, that he is called the false prophet, because the issue of this battle shall fully prove that he was a false prophet when he represented the church of Rome as the true church of God, and himself and that church as infallible. In chap. xix. 20. he is again called the false prophet, and he is described in the same manner as he is described in chap. xiii. 11.—15, as working miracles before the beast, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image ; to shew us that he is the same person under a different name. The Pope too shall exert himself individually to the utmost of his power, in collecting forces from every quarter. These emissaries are unclean spirits like frogs. However, zealous for religion, they are, like unclean beasts, unfit for the pure worship of the altar of God. As frogs are amphibious animals,
they

they shall put on an amphibious character, and address either the temporal or spiritual interests of those whom they solicit to the war, which ever of them they shall judge to be most effectual. To men who have no regard to religion, they will shew as little; but will represent to them how deeply their temporal interests are engaged in this war. To men blinded by superstition, they will pretend that they despise their temporal concerns; but they call upon them to fight for their religion, and their church. To work the more powerfully upon such persons, they will perform false miracles before them. The battle, to which they shall be gathered is called the battle of that great day of God Almighty. It shall be that great battle, which he hath predicted; in which he shall totally overthrow Papal Rome, and fully prove, to the world, his own omnipotence, by the full establishment of his church, and overthrow of all her enemies.

“Behold I come as a thief.” In these words, it is intimated that however clearly this battle of the great day of the Lord hath been foretold, that, when it actually happens, it shall come upon the greatest part of men, especially upon the votaries of Rome, suddenly and unexpectedly. Not crediting these predictions, or not applying them to themselves, they shall be surprized and taken at unawares, by the event itself.

“ And he gathered them together, unto a place, “ called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon.” The *he* here evidently refers to the sixth angel, in the beginning of verse 12th. That is, by the instrumentality of the devil, of the Roman hierarchy, of the Pope, of some of the European kingdoms, and of the Turks, this dispensation of divine providence shall, without knowing that they are fulfilling the prophecies of God, collect all these forces to a particular place, as the principal field of action; which according to the import of the Hebrew word, may justly be called Armageddon. This word, in the Hebrew language, signifies the turrets which are devoted to destruction. Most probably it signifies the many lofty turrets of Rome, which had long ago been devoted to destruction by the predictions of God; and which shall be destroyed by the army, which at this time shall forever bury the name of Rome under the rubbish of its fallen towers, to which the name of Armageddon shall fitly apply. That Armageddon signifies the city of Rome, for the reason just now given, is still farther evident from what is said as to the field of action in this war, in chap. xiv. 20.

The precise time of the commencement of this war, or rather of this great and decisive battle; predicted in this sixth vial, I do not pretend to fix exactly; first, because it is not fixed in the prediction

tion itself; and next, because it cannot be fixed from history, the time of its commencement not being yet come. But it is probable, that it will be sometime in the year 1998, because it must immediately precede the seventh vial, which closes that war, and announces the total overthrow of Rome as the close of it. It was formerly shewn that Rome shall be finally overthrown in the end of the year 1999; and we may reasonably suppose that a little more than one year will be sufficient, and not more than sufficient time for collecting the forces, and fighting the battle predicted in the sixth vial; which would run it back to sometime in the year 1998. Its commencement may be either a little earlier or later; but its termination will be near the end of the year 1999.

Verses 17th,—21th.—And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple in heaven, from the throne, saying, it is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance

before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

The seventh angel poured out his vial into the air. The air is the region and medium of lightning, thunder, hail, and storms. These are produced by the changes which take place in the state of the air. As these are the judgements which are predicted in this vial, it is therefore said to be poured into the air. Changes in the civil, political, and religious state of the world, are expressed in the symbolical language, by correspondent changes in the state of the natural world. Hence, as this vial predicts the total overthrow of Papal Rome, and a great change, for the better, of the general state of the civil, political, and religious condition of the world, the vial is said to be poured into the air, to signify that the very atmosphere of civil and religious government; under which men shall live, after the time of this vial, shall be purified and refined, having discharged

ed itself of every noxious quality by these storms of thunder, lightening and hail.

The great voice, out of the temple in heaven from the throne, saying, "It is done," is a reference to what was said to John by a voice from heaven chap. x, when he was prohibited from writing the seven thunders, which he then heard, because the time for them was not then come; but was told that he should write them, in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, for the mystery of God should then be finished. When therefore this great voice out of the temple says, "It is done," he gives him the signal, that this is the proper place, in which he should write these seven or finishing thunders; because this seventh vial is cotemporary with the founding of the trumpet by the seventh angel, and under it the mystery of God shall be finished.

The thunders wrote out at full length under this vial, are those which John was prohibited from writing in chap. x, and which he is now allowed to write, by the great voice, which said unto him, it is done. To hinder a long repetition, the reader will please look back to the commentary on chap. x. 3,—7. and on chap. xi. 15,—19, from which passages he will see the connection between them and this one now under our view, and also that the seventh trumpet and seventh vial are cotemporary with each other.

This

This voice is said to come out of the temple in heaven; because, at the time of the event to which it refers, the wilderness state of the church shall be almost at an end, and its triumphant state, represented by the opening of the temple, shall be just at hand: and from the throne, because it shall then appear that the church of Christ is the kingdom of God, when every opposing power must fall before Him whose throne is in the heavens, and whose kingdom ruleth over all. There was a great earthquake, accompanied with a violent storm. It was formerly shewn that, in the symbolical language, an earthquake signifies a revolution in the civil, political, and religious state of the world; that it is always used in this book, to signify a revolution in all the places in which revolutions are predicted in it; and that when the earthquake is accompanied with thunder, lightening, hail, and storms, it always signifies that the revolution is brought about by wars.

This revolution shall be upon the *earth*, that is, the Roman empire: but it shall be such an one as has not been since men were upon the earth. From the foundation of the Roman empire by Romulus and Remus to the present day, there have been many great and violent revolutions in Rome. It hath undergone, in its constitution and government, a revolution from kings to consuls, from consuls to dictators, from dictators to decem-

virs,

virs, from decemvirs to military tribunes with consular authority, from military tribunes to emperors, from heathen emperors to Christian emperors: Which last revolution, happening to fall within the period of these prophecies, is predicted in chap. vi. 12,—17, by the symbol of a *great earthquake*.

It underwent a greater revolution than any of these when the imperial government was overthrown, when the empire was totally dissolved by the northern barbarous nations, when the city of Rome, for a considerable time, ceased to be the seat of any government, and was only a small dukedom under the Exarchate of Ravenna. It underwent a great revolution, when the western empire, after this dissolution of it, was parcelled out into many independent kingdoms. It underwent a great revolution, when the Papal dominion was erected in Rome, and all these kings and kingdoms, however independent, were controuled by the Papal nod. It underwent a great revolution when, at the glorious reformation, so many of these kingdoms shook off all subjection to and connection with Rome; and the rest of them began to feel their own independence and power. This last revolution is predicted in this book, chap. xi. 13, by a *great earthquake*. But not one of these revolutions is to be compared with the one predicted in this passage:

“ There was a great earthquake, such as was

“ not

“not since men were upon earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.” The greatness of this revolution is described in verses 19, 20, 21. in which, in symbolical language, it is predicted that Rome and all her cities, islands, strong-holds, and dependences, shall be totally destroyed. After all her former revolutions, Rome lifted up her head, and even after the total dissolution of the empire by the northern barbarians; but, after this revolution, she shall never more be numbered among the kingdoms of the world. Her name would sink unto total oblivion, were it not that perhaps it may be remembered to the disgrace of her memory. As we proceed, it shall more fully appear in chapters xvii. xviii. xix. that Rome shall never rise more, either as a temporal kingdom or a church, after this revolution.

The events predicted in this vial shall take place in the end of the year 1999. They refer to the final overthrow of Papal Rome, as the last head of Roman government. But it was formerly shewn that the Papal became a temporal kingdom in the year 756, and that it was to continue for 1243 years, which two numbers, when added together, fix the termination of that empire to the end of the year 1999. Therefore this seventh vial, which predicts its final overthrow, must refer to that year. This vial takes up little or no time, it relates only the nature and consequences of those wars,

wars, which are predicted under the sixth seal. It is, as it were, the closing of the period of the vials, and almost cotemporary with the opening of the succeeding period of the millennium. The seventh seal, the seventh trumpet, and the seventh vial, are all, in this respect, analogous. In chap. viii. 1. the seventh seal takes up almost no time; but just closes the seals, and opens up the trumpets. In chap. xi. 15,—19. the seventh trumpet takes up no time, but just closes the period of the trumpets, and opens up the succeeding period of the millennium, and refers to this seventh vial as cotemporary with itself, saying, “and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake.”

C H A P. XVII.

Verses 1st, 2d. **A**ND there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither, I will shew unto thee the judgement of the great whore, that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

In this chapter an angel is introduced, in order to explain to John the plain meaning of the preceding prophecies relative to Papal Rome. Such explanations are an established part of prophetic writings. They are to be found in the prophecies of Ezekiel, of Daniel, of John, and in all prophetic writings of any considerable length. They form a part of the idiom of prophetic language, so to speak. From verse 1st to 6th, the angel in vision gives John a compendious description of the preceding

ceeding prophecies, which he intends to explain to him. From verse 7th to the end of the chapter, he gives him a most minute, full, and striking explanation of them. On the first six verses I shall be only general and short in the commentary; because the same unerring spirit who dictated the prophecies explains them fully in the last ten verses of the chapter, in the commentary on which I shall be more full.

In the two first verses, John, in vision, saw an angel come unto him, and heard him talk with him. The angel told him, that he would shew him the judgement which at last should be passed upon a great idolatrous city and church that sits upon many waters; who had seduced to idolatry all the kings of the various kingdoms which had arisen out of the western Roman empire; and who had intoxicated all their subjects with her idolatry and superstition. It is well known, that the terms of lewdness used in these verses are those which are used in the Old Testament, particularly in the prophetic parts of it, to signify idolatry and superstition. And it is evident from the whole strain of this book, that in it they are used in that sense.

Verses 3d, 4th.—So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness; and I saw a

woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads, and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet-colour, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations, and filthiness of her fornication.

To be carried in spirit to any place, is not to be actually carried to that place; but it is to have our spirit or mind impressed by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, in the same manner as it would have been by our having been bodily in that place. Here John informs us, that he was under the influence of divine inspiration; that in this way he saw a particular vision; and that the scene of this vision appeared to his mind to be the wilderness. The wilderness signifies the wilderness state of the church, which, as was formerly shewn, commenced A. D. 756, and shall continue to the year 1999. The reason of mentioning the wilderness as the scene of this vision, is to inform us that the description of the idolatrous and superstitious city, state, and church, given in the following vision, agrees to that city, state, and church, during, and only during that period, which runs from A. D. 756 to A. D. 1999.

In the wilderness, that is, during that period, he saw the vision exactly as described in these verses.

By

By divine inspiration, the very same impressions were made upon his mind, that would have been made upon it by the natural mode of vision; had he actually seen with his bodily eyes, a woman so seated, so clothed, with such a name written on her forehead, and so employed as the woman is described in verses 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th. The woman, as shall be shewn in the last part of this chapter, is the idolatrous city and church of Rome. The beast or *beast* which supports her, is the beast with seven heads and ten horns, full of the names of blasphemy. This description exactly agrees to the beast described in chap. xiii. which was there shewn to be the Papal hierarchy, in the character of a temporal kingdom.

This beast is scarlet-coloured, to mark the bloody and persecuting character of Papal Rome. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet-colour. In Heathen Rome, purple and scarlet were the colours of the imperial habit; the former in times of peace, and the latter in times of war. It is well known that these colours were thence introduced into Papal Rome, and used by the Pope and cardinals. To be raised to the purple or scarlet hat, is the ordinary term for being made a cardinal. Decked with gold, precious stones, and pearls, signifies the great quantity of these, and of other showy and costly ornaments, with which the Pope and the Popish churches are adorned. Having

a golden cup in her hand, signifies that she seduces some to her idolatry by her outward magnificence, shew, and splendid ornaments; and others by the prospect of riches or worldly gain. So depraved, alas! is human nature in its present state; and such strangers are many men to the spirituality, purity, and simplicity of religious worship, that they think it mean and vulgar to worship God in any church whose ordinances are not shewy and pompous. Like the idolatrous Israelites, they wish to have a god that may be seen, and that may go before them; and they make a golden calf and fall down and worship it. Others will be the votaries of any church for worldly gain. With them gain is godliness. To both, with that worldly wisdom for which she hath long been distinguished, Rome holds out her golden cup, and seduces them to her idolatrous superstition.

Verse 5th.—And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth.

By the name written on her forehead, it is signified, that during the period to which this vision refers, her name is very conspicuous, and may easily be perceived by every unprejudiced person.

Names

Names were originally given, not only to distinguish one thing or person from another, but also to express their real nature or true character, as must be evident to every intelligent person who reads with attention the books of Moses. Hence, in scripture, the name of a person is frequently used to signify the nature or character of that person whose name it is. In this sense, in scripture, the name of God signifies the nature of God. By her name, therefore, in her forehead it is meant, that her character shall conspicuously correspond to her name. Her name consists of three distinct parts, or rather of three distinct names. It is thus signified, that her character shall correspond to the true meaning of every one of these three names.

It is not within the calculation of chances, that when three names of different meanings are given to any church or state above 600 years before that church or state had any existence, yet when it is brought into existence, its real character shall exactly agree to the true meaning of every one of these names, unless these names had been a real prediction by the Spirit of God of the character of that church and state. If only one name had been given, there might have been some, but a most distant chance, that it might have corresponded to the character of that state. If then it shall appear that the character of Papal Rome corresponds

corresponds to every one of these names, no unprejudiced person can doubt that Rome is the city and church signified by them.

The first of these names is *Mystery*. That under that divine providence which governs the world, such a church as that of Rome should arise, become so great, continue so long, bear the name of Christian, and yet in doctrine, worship, discipline, and conduct be so evidently Antichristian, is a great mystery. To us short sighted creatures, the ways of divine providence often appear mysterious. Though justice and sound wisdom are ever the habitation of God's throne, yet clouds and darkness often appear to us to be around him. But of all the ways of providence, none is more mysterious than that a church calling herself Christian, and acting contrary to that Christianity which is taught in the sacred scriptures by Christ and his apostles, should have in appearance triumphed over the true church of Christ for so long a time. This is a mystery, which most probably shall not be unveiled to men until that day when this mystery of iniquity shall be overthrown, when, as mentioned in chap. x. 7. of this book, "the mystery of God shall be finished." The state and church of Papal Rome was predicted by Paul in 2 Thess. ii. 7. by the name of "the Mystery of Iniquity." The reader will please read and consider that passage, as it is contained at full length in
2 Thess.

2 Theff. ii. 1,—12. which is one of the most striking and characteristic prophecies of Papal Rome that is any where to be found.

The second is *Babylon the Great*, that is, that city of which ancient Babylon was a striking type or symbol. Ancient Babylon was marked by her pride, ambition, luxury, idolatry, number and grandeur of her images, and her persecution of the church of God. Are not all these also the most prominent features in the character of Papal Rome? Is she not therefore Babylon the Great?

The third is, *The Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth*. It is well known, that in scripture, in the symbolical language, harlots signify idolaters, and abominations idolatry. The earth signifies the Western Roman empire. Without entering into any disquisition about the nature of idolatry and superstition, it must be admitted, that in the Western empire, since the year 756, many images have been used in the worship of God; the Virgin Mary and saints departed have been frequently invoked in prayer, if not as the objects of it, which some of the prayers seem to insinuate, at least as intercessors with God; and that the bread in the ordinance of our Lord's Supper hath been first deified by the prayer of a priest, and then adored. It must also be admitted, that not one of these is enjoined in the sacred scriptures, but that they are all prohibited in them. Without enume-

rating particulars, have not many modes of religious worship been practised in the Western empire, which are not instituted in the word of God, and which are inconsistent with the genius of that spiritual, true, and simple worship of God, which is taught by the gospel of Jesus? Do not the inspired scriptures of the New Testament say, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matth. iv. 10. John iv. 24. 1 Tim. ii. 5. Matth. xv. 9. Since it is a fact too public and frequent that such idolaters and such idolatries have long abounded in the Western empire, they must have proceeded from some source. But is it not equally well known, that they have all proceeded from the church of Rome? Is she not, therefore, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth? Does not every one of these three names exactly agree to her character? It is not easy to say which of them fits Rome best, they all fit her so well. Must not then Papal Rome be the city and church designed by this three-fold name?

Verse

Verse 6th.—And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

In this verse, the woman is represented as shedding, to the greatest excess, the blood of the saints, and of the martyrs or witnesses of Jesus. This Rome hath done to the greatest excess in the period of the vision.

At this part of her conduct, John wondered greatly. To see men of any denomination shedding the blood of their fellow men, for articles of faith, and modes of worship, is shocking to humanity: to see heathen Rome, who knew not God, nor Jesus Christ whom he had sent, shedding the blood of saints, was shocking; but not more wonderful than many others of the shocking vices of degenerate man. But to see a church, who called herself Christian; to see those, who profess themselves the disciples of that Jesus, who said, not to the successor of Peter only, but to Peter himself, “Put up thy sword into its place, for he that killeth with the sword, shall be killed by the sword;” of that Jesus who thus rebuked the blind zeal of his disciples, when they asked power from him to call down fire from heaven to destroy the Samaritans, because they would not follow

their master, nor become members of their church; “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, “for the son of man is not come to destroy men’s “lives, but to save them:” to see those who call themselves the subjects of that prince of peace, who hath declared to his subjects that the weapons of their warfare are not carnal but spiritual, and that, “them that are without God will judge;” to see these deluging the world with the blood of innocent, of holy men, merely because, as Christians, they considered themselves bound in conscience to keep the word of God, to bear their testimony to Jesus, and to acknowledge no power on earth superior to God, and no standard of faith, worship, and obedience, superior to the holy bible, was indeed a shocking and a wonderful sight.

Verses 7th, 8th.—And the angel said unto me, wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads, and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest, was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go unto perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, (whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of
of

of the world), when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

The seventh verse informs us, that, in the following part of this chapter, we shall find a plain account of the true meaning of the woman and the beast, represented in the preceeding vision. That we may be certain that the following explication refers to the woman and the beast exhibited in the preceding vision; the beast is expressly said to be the one with the seven heads, and the ten horns, and the woman to be the one, who sits on that beast; which is the very description given of them in the vision, verse 3d.

The beast with the seven heads and the ten horns, as was formerly shewn, is the Roman empire. This empire, in its heathen state, was before the year 99, in which John saw this vision, and Rome the city built upon the seven hills was the seat of that government. But that beast with the names of blasphemies upon it, that is, the Papal Roman empire, was not in existence at the time of the vision. It did not rise into existence until 657 years after that time; therefore, in that point of view John says that "the beast is not." This beast shall ascend out of the bottomless pit; that is, that ecclesiastic form, which the empire shall assume under its last head, and those erroneous doctrines, modes of worship, and rules of discipline

cipline and of life, by which this last head of Roman government shall be distinguished from the imperial form, shall all be the contrivance of Satan to seduce men from the purity and simplicity of the gospel of Jesus. In the language of Paul to Timothy, 1 Tim. iv. 1,—3. these doctrines are said to proceed from seducing spirits, and to be doctrines of devils. “ Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving head to *seducing spirits*, and doctrines of *devils* ; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with an hot iron ; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them who believe and know the truth.”

On account of the origin of those erroneous doctrines, by which the bishop of Rome was prepared for becoming a temporal prince, this beast is said to “ ascend out of the bottomless pit,” or hell ; for from thence these doctrines are said to ascend, as was formerly shewn in the commentary on the fifth trumpet, chap. ix. 1,—11. In verses 1st, 2d, of that chapter, it is said, “ And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven to the earth, and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit, and he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace.” Verse 11th, “ And
“ they

“ they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name, in the Hebrew tongue, is Abbaddon ; but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.” And also on account of his being raised to the temporal dominion of Rome, by the arts of the devil, as predicted in chap. xii. 3,—9. and in chap. xiii. 2.

“ And shall go into perdition.” This seventh shall be the last head of Roman government. Though new heads have always risen up in Rome, after the former ones were destroyed, this beast itself, which, on account of its blasphemies is said to come from hell, shall go unto destruction. It is not the head only that shall be wounded, as was the case with the imperial head, as mentioned in chap. xiii. 3 ; but it is the entire beast, the Roman government itself, that shall go into perdition, and shall never more be ranked among the kingdoms of the world, either under the old Papal head, or under any new head whatever.

All they that dwell upon the earth, that is, all the inhabitants of the Western empire, shall greatly wonder, when Rome shall again become the seat of government under the Popes, after the total dissolution of the empire by the Goths. They shall wonder at this as a great and wonderful event, and they shall wonder after, by paying the most abject and flattering obedience to the Papal government. Like men thunderstruck and astonished,

nished, their obedience shall be the most complete, but not rational. Their intellectual powers being suspended by their wonder and astonishment, their faith and obedience shall therefore be implicit.

But a certain description of men, who shall be dwelling within the boundaries of the Western empire, shall neither wonder at nor after the beast. They, whose names are written in the book of life, who are spiritually alive in Christ Jesus; that is, all true Christians; they shall not wonder at that event, because it was foretold by those inspired scriptures, which they believe and study, and therefore was not unexpected by them. They shall not wonder after the beast: being spiritually alive, their intellectual and religious powers are awake, they therefore will give implicit faith and obedience to none. They prove all things and hold fast that which is good. They can give a reason of the faith and of the hope which is in them.

They follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth, and therefore cannot wonder after the beast. They trust in Christ as the Saviour of his people, and therefore keep at a distance from the beast, who is the Apollyon, the Destroyer.

This beast "was, and is not, and yet is." He was, before John's day, in the imperial, and other preceding heads of Roman government. He
is,

is not in John's day, in his public and visible character, as the Papal and last head of Roman government: Yet, in another sense, he then actually existed. That spiritual pride, ambition, desire of pre-eminence, fondness for abrogated and uninstituted modes of religious worship, implicit attachment to men's persons, and the robbing Christ of his real glory, which are the essential qualities of the Papal constitution, were in the world, and had discovered many symptoms of their existence, in the apostolic age. Hence, in this view, John, the last of the apostles, could say of the beast, "He is." To this purpose, John thus expresses himself, in his first epistle; chap. iv. 3. "And this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof "you have heard that it should come; and even "now already is it in the world." By the influence of Satan, these essential qualities of Antichrist were nourished and gradually strengthened in the world, even in the apostolic age. In a succeeding period, they were to become more visible; when that person, the constitution of whose government should be made up of them, should be raised to his throne. But before he could be raised to his throne, it must be left vacant by the demise of that king who then possessed it.

His throne, as shall appear in the sequel of this chapter, is in the city of Rome: But that throne was possessed by the emperors in the days of John.

The imperial government of Rome behaved, therefore, to be dissolved, before Antichrist, who existed secretly in John's day, could be raised to the Papal throne of Rome. This is the very thing, which Paul said on this subject, in the apostolic age, 2 Theff. ii. 7, 8. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he who now letteth (*i. e.* hindereth) will let until he be taken out of the way, and then shall that wicked be revealed." The reader is desired to peruse the whole passage from verse 1st, to 12th. In these words, the apostle Paul perfectly agrees with the apostle John in declaring, that the beast was in the world in their day ; but that he could not be manifested publicly on his throne, until the imperial head, which then possessed it, should be taken out of the way. Let us, in this account of the beast, "that he is not and yet is," which at first glance appears to the ignorant so contradictory, behold and admire the precision and accuracy of the inspired writers, and their exact agreement with one another. "That he is not and yet is," is a description of this beast, expressive of the most accurate knowledge of his real character and situation. By this description, John so exactly agrees with Paul, and with himself in his first epistle, that he puts it out of the power of infidels to say, with effect, that the Pope is not the Antichrist of whom John speaks in his epistle, or that he

he is not the mystery of iniquity, the man of sin, the son of perdition, the wicked of whom Paul speaks. Had John said of the beast that he was, and is not, but not also said, "that he is," infidels might have said, as Paul and John were nearly cotemporary writers, and as the epistles of John were written by the same person who wrote this book, the Antichrist which was in John's day, and the mystery of iniquity, which was in Paul's day, could not be the beast of whom John wrote in the revelation, because he said of him "that he is not;" but adding, "and yet he is," he fully obviates that objection. By this mode of expression he leads men to attend to the distinction between the existence and the public appearance of a person; between the state of an heir apparent to a crown, and the actual coronation of that person, when he ascends the throne that had been left vacant for him by the demise of his predecessor.

Verses 9th, 10th, 11th.—And here is the mind, which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth, and there are seven kings. Five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh he must continue a short space. And the beast that was

and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

“Here is the mind that hath wisdom.” By this expression, as was formerly shewn in the commentary on chap. xiii. 18, intimation is given to us, that what follows to the end of this chapter is a key to the preceding vision of the woman and the beast; and therefore, that all the explanatory parts of it are to be taken in a literal and ordinary, not in a symbolical or prophetic sense. I have said explanatory parts, because, as will be evident to every reader, the following verses consist of two parts; first a short repetition of the different parts of the vision of the woman and of the beast described in verses 3, 4, 5, 6. of this chapter, in which first part the language must necessarily be symbolical; and second, the particular explication of that vision, in which the whole language is literal and plain.

The seven heads of the beast are the first part of the vision which the angel explained unto John. The explication of this part is perfectly clear in the original, but is considerably darkened by our translation. It is thus expressed in the original, *Αἱ ἑπτα κεφαλαὶ ὅρη ἐστὶν ἑπτα, ἐπεὶ ἡ γυνὴ καθίσταται ἐπ’ αὐτὰν, ὃ βασιλεὺς ἑπτα ἐστίν.* The literal translation of which is, “the seven heads are seven mountains, in the place where the woman sits upon
“ them,

“them, and they are seven kings.” By ending the sentence, as in our translation, at the word *fitteth*, and by beginning the next one thus, “and there are seven kings,” the seven kings are separated from their antecedent, and the verb *are* from its nominative ; so that it appears, as if the words “and there are seven kings” had no connection with the seven heads in the preceding verse. Whereas, it is clear from the original, that the seven heads are the antecedent both to the seven mountains and to the seven kings, and the nominative to both the verbs which precede the mountains and the kings.

Hence, nothing can be more evident than this explication. The seven heads are the symbol of, and they signify seven mountains, in that particular place on which the city is built, which is represented by the woman ; and they signify also seven kings, or distinct forms of civil government, every one of which hath that city for its seat. It is universally known, that the city of Rome is built upon seven mountains. The following are their names, viz. Mons Palatinus, Cœlius, Capitolinus, Aventinus, Quirinalis, Viminalis, and Esquilinus. By this very uncommon situation, Rome was so perfectly distinguished from every other city in the world, that both the Greek and Latin writers call her the city on the seven hills, *ἑπτάκορος*, and *Urbs Septicollis* ; by which name, every reader understood

flood as perfectly that Rome was meant, as if they had read the word Rome itself.

Ovid, *Trist.* l. i. *eleg.* 4. thus describes the situation of the city of Rome: "Quæ de septem
" totum circumspicit orbem montibus, imperii Ro-
" ma Deumque locus." That is, "Rome the seat
" of the gods and of empire, which surveys the
" whole world from her seven mountains." That it is the city of Rome, literally and locally, which is meant, is evident not only from the description of its situation, by the seven mountains, but also from the very uncommon mode of expression in the original language, which I have literally translated "in the place where the woman sits upon them;" by which expression, the locality of the city is fixed in as plain and strong terms as language can afford.

As Rome is in fact built upon seven hills, so when we count the forms of government which have had their seat in that city, from the day in which Romulus founded the Roman empire to the present day, we shall find them also exactly seven. A very eminent Roman historian tells us, that in his day there had been five distinct forms of government in Rome; and it is universally known, that there have been just two more since his time. Tacitus, *Annal.* l. i. c. 1. says, "Rome was
" first governed by Kings, then by Consuls, by
" Dictators, by Decemvirs, by Military Tribunes
" with

“with consular authority.” Since that time, there have been Emperors; and there are now Popes.

In verses 10th, 11th, the angel enters into a very particular narrative relative to these kings or forms of government; a narrative, which to those who are ignorant of the true meaning of the seven heads, and of the real history of Rome, will appear unintelligible and self-contradictory. For of the beast he says, he is the eighth, and yet is one of the seven. Such persons will say, that it is self-contradictory: how can the identical same beast be both the eighth and one of the seven? Form not so rash a judgement: Attend with candour to what follows; and I trust you shall perceive this unintelligible and contradictory part the most intelligible, exact, and complete key to this part of the vision that can be formed.

Of these kings, five are fallen. Before John's day the five successive forms of government in Rome, by Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, and Military Tribunes with consular authority, were all passed away. “And one is.” Though these five forms of government were all past, Rome was not in John's day in a state of anarchy, nor was the empire then dissolved; the imperial, the sixth form of government in Rome, was then in existence. Domitian one of these emperors, in a persecution raised against Christians, banished John to the island of Patmos, in
the

the year of Christ 95, when and where he wrote these words. It is universally known, that the imperial government was then in existence. "And the other is not yet come, and when he cometh he must continue a short space." After the imperial government should be dissolved, another, or as the word in the original imports, one of a different kind from any of the seven forms of government should come, and continue for a short space of time, before the beast exhibited in the vision should arise.

The imperial government continued for 377 years after John wrote this book. At last, imperial Rome, the proud mistress of the world, crushed by her own greatness, weakened by her own luxury, and impoverished by her immense riches, fell an easy prey to the Goths and other northern barbarous nations. Momillus, who was also called Augustulus, the last of the emperors, overcome by Odoacer king of the Heruli, abdicated the empire, A. D. 476. At that time, the empire was dissolved; and in that fatal year Rome ceased to be what she had always been since the days of Romulus, a seat of government. Odoacer did not reside at Rome, nor take the title of Rome, or any other title borrowed from the city of Rome. He was styled king of Italy. When Theodoric, the first Gothic king of Italy, conquered Odoacer, A. D. 494, he made Ravenna the seat of the Gothic kingdom

kingdom of Italy. The whole western empire was parcelled out into distinct and independent kingdoms, among the different barbarous nations who had overrun and dissolved it. The city of Rome was not the seat of any government, for any part of the time that Italy was in the hands of the Goths, and other northern nations.

After a considerable time, Justinian, the emperor of the Eastern empire, sent his armies into Italy, under the command of the great generals Belisarius and Narfes. They broke the power of the Gothic kingdom, and recovered the greatest part of Italy to the obedience of the emperors of Constantinople. The Greek emperors administered the government of Italy by lieutenants, under the title of Dukes of Italy. Narfes was made the first Duke of Italy, A. D. 553.

Of this government of Italy Sigonius thus writes, *De Regno Italiæ*, p. 3. "Exactis autem
 " Gothis, expulso ipse victorque Narfes a Justiniano
 " imperatore summæ rerum præpositus, titulo
 " Ducis Italici sumpto; Italiam per hos provinciarum
 " præfectos, pro suo arbitrio, administravit." That is, "But the Goths being driven
 " out of Italy, the victorious Narfes himself, who
 " had driven them out, was intrusted with the
 " chief administration of affairs by the emperor
 " Justinian, under the title of Duke of Italy; and
 " he administered the affairs of Italy by these lieutenants

“tenants of provinces, according to his own pleasure.”

About the year 568, the Lombards invaded, and made themselves masters of almost all Italy, except Rome and Ravenna. At this time, though Rome belonged to the Eastern emperor, yet that city was not the seat of government; the governor resided at Ravenna, under the title of the Exarch of Ravenna; and Rome was only a small dukedom under the Exarchate. This Exarch of Ravenna was the other, or one of a different kind, who should come, and who actually came after the empire was dissolved.

But he was to continue only for a short space. This prediction was also verified. For Longinus was made the first Exarch, A. D. 568, and Eutichius was the last, when Aistulphus king of the Lombards took Ravenna, A. D. 752. *Sigon. de Regno Italie*, pages 8, and 374: So that he continued only 185 years, which is a short space, when compared with the 382 years which the emperors were to continue after the vision, or the 1243 years the Papal head of government was to continue.

From the year 752 to the year 756, the time was spent by negotiations between Aistulphus and Pope Stephen II. and by wars and negotiations between Aistulphus and Pepin king of France, until, in the year 756, Pepin vested Pope Stephen II.

with

with the temporal dominion of Rome, which he and his successors have kept ever since, *Sigon. de Regno Italiæ*, p. 75,—80.

“ And the beast that was and is not, even he is “ the eighth, and is of the seven.” The beast in the vision was to succeed the Exarch of Ravenna, and on that account, may be called the eighth form of government in Rome, when the Exarch is counted as one of them. But, according to the symbol of the seven heads, as explained by the angel to signify seven mountains and seven kings in union, the Exarch is not to be counted ; because the seat of his government was Ravenna ; and not Rome, the city built upon seven mountains. None are to be counted among the kings, signified by the seven heads, except those who had for the seat of their government the city on the seven hills ; and hence, when you take into the count the Exarch, that one of a different kind from the rest, the beast in the vision will be the eighth ; but when you count only those who have all agreed in this leading feature, that they had their seat of government in the city of Rome, then the beast is one of the seven. As six of the seven were past before the Exarch, and as the beast in the vision hath arisen immediately after the Exarch, he must be the seventh. Is not the Papal the only form of government which hath had the city of Rome for its seat since the dissolution of the empire under

Momillus? Was not the imperial, which ended in Momillus, the sixth form of government which had its seat in the city of Rome? After the dissolution of the empire, and the unsettled state of Italy under the northern barbarians, none of whom had Rome for the seat of their government, did not the Exarch of Ravenna govern it for a short time as a small dukedom under him, while he had his seat of government in Ravenna? And did not Pepin king of France raise Pope Stephen II. to the temporal dominion of Rome, with the city of Rome for his seat of government, A. D. 756? Is not therefore the Papal government of Rome the beast with the seven heads? Hath that government, with that seat of it, continued for 1034 years? Is not this a strong presumption that it shall continue for the remaining 209 years of the 1243, for which this book says he should continue.

“And goeth into perdition.” He is the last head of Roman government, for the beast had only seven heads: When the seventh head, therefore, receives a deadly wound, the beast itself must die. The Papal and the Roman government shall both end together in the year 1999.

This key, “he is the eighth and is of the seven,” so exactly fits all the uncommon wards of that lock which is to be opened by it, that when deliberately examined, it appears to exceed all created skill. Had John said the beast was the seventh, the votaries

taries of Rome would have said, It is not the Papal government which is intended, because the Exarch was the seventh, and therefore the Papal is the eighth: or had he said he is the eighth, they would have said the Exarch was but a depute himself, under the Grecian emperors, and therefore could not be counted a form of government, so that the Papal is the seventh, and therefore, cannot be the beast to whom John refers. But, says John, in this key, to prevent all such quibbling, count the Exarchate a form of Roman government or not, as you please, and you shall find that this key opens the beast with the seven heads, so as to discover the Papal form of Roman government, and no other one. For, if you count the Exarch one, then remember I have said the beast is the eighth; but if you do not count the Exarch one of the seven, but one of a different kind, as I do, then remember that I have told you that the beast is of the seven. Count therefore, as you please, you shall not derange this mark of the beast which I have fixed upon the Papal government.

Verse 12th.—And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet, but receive power as kings, one hour with the beast.

The

The ten horns are ten kings, that is, ten distinct independent rulers of kingdoms. None of them had received his kingdom in the days of John, but they were all to rise into existence as independent kingdoms, at the same time with Papal Rome.

“One hour with the beast.” Some commentators think that this phrase should have been translated at the same hour, or same time, with the beast. To this interpretation I could have had no objection, if *μικτὸν ὥραν* had been in the ablative and not in the accusative case. But, whether we translate it at the same time, or for one hour, that is, for a short time with the beast, it will equally correspond to the fact. For ten kingdoms rose out of the western Roman empire, a very short time before the Papal became a temporal kingdom; and the complete number ten continued only for a very short time after the Papal government arose. The greatest part of one of them was destroyed in the very erection of the Papal kingdom: A great part of the kingdom of Ravenna was contained in the grant which Pepin made to Pope Stephen II. by which he and his successors became temporal princes. Other two of these kingdoms, which had their seats also in Italy, were soon swallowed up by the Papal kingdom, so that the ten kingdoms continued entire with the beast only for a very short time.

The

The prophet Daniel gives a very minute account of these ten horns. With John he tells us, that they are ten kings who were afterwards to arise; but he tells us farther, that the Papal power was very soon to pluck up just three of them, and consequently, that all the ten were to exist only a short time with him. Dan. vii. 8. "I considered
" the horns, and behold there came up among
" them another little horn, before whom there
" were *three* of the first horns plucked up by the
" roots; and behold, in this horn were eyes, like
" the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great
" things." Verse 24th. "And the ten horns out
" of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise:
" and another shall rise after them, and he shall
" be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue
" three kings." And then in verse 25th, he describes the Papal government most exactly.

Let us now see if it appears from history, that ten kings rose out of the Western empire, at the time the Pope became a temporal prince, and if he soon swallowed up three of these.

The ten following kingdoms rose out of the Western empire, just before the Pope became a temporal prince; the Franks and Burgundians in Gaul; the Goths and Visigoths in Spain; the English and Scottish in Britain; the Lombards, the Normans, and the kingdom of Ravenna in Italy; and the Saracens in Africa. For these, consult

Sigonius

Sigonius de Occidentali imperio, p. 358. also *Ibid. de Regno Italiae*. p. 2,—75. and *Mosheim*, Vol. i, p. 343. That a considerable part of Ravenna was gifted by Pepin to the Pope when he was first created a temporal prince, Sigonius tells us, *De Regno Italiae*, p. 79, 80. All Italy soon became subject to the Roman pontiff, and hath long continued subject to him. But, in Italy there were exactly three of these ten kingdoms, viz, Ravenna, and the kingdoms of the Lombards and Normans in Italy. Since that time, though the boundaries of these kingdoms, their number and names, have varied, the Western empire hath been still divided into many distinct and independent kingdoms.

Verse 13th.—These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength to the beast.

However much these kingdoms should differ in other things, they were to be unanimous in giving their strength and authority to the beast. Accordingly, in fact, they all became Roman Catholic; they were all obedient to the nod of the Pope; and with the greatest alacrity, they devoted to his service and support their whole strength and authority. Whenever he pleased, he called forth their whole strength, to execute his projects,
and

and carry on his wars, however foolish and unjust. In the time of the croisades, he called forth their kings, and all their forces and treasures, to fight against the Turks, until, by that mad project, he had almost beggared and depopulated Europe.

Verse 14th.—These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them : for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings ; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

These kings, like the Pope himself, shall fight against Christ the Lamb of God, and persecute Christians his followers. This, it is well known, they did. For this wicked purpose, they frequently gave their strength and authority to Papal Rome.

In this war they shall be unsuccessful : not one of them shall be able to banish true Christians entirely out of their dominions. The Lamb shall overcome every one of them. Some of them he shall subdue by his grace, and conquer by the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. They shall abandon Popery, and support the kingdom of God in the world. And the few who shall continue attached to Papal Rome to the last, he shall crush with his rod of iron, as predicted of him in Psalm ii. 9,—12.

“Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: Blessed are all they who put their trust in him.” The reader is desired to peruse with attention the whole of that psalm, which is a most pointed prophecy of the persecution of the church of Christ by the kingdoms of this world, and of that sovereign contempt with which God looks down upon weak mortals attempting to overthrow the kingdom of the Almighty.

The angel assigns two reasons why Christ shall overcome these kingdoms, and why his kingdom and church shall at last be victorious in this world, when they and Papal Rome shall be crushed as a potter’s sherd. And they are the real reasons of his success.

The first is, that “he is Lord of lords, and King of kings.” He is the omnipotent God. His providence and grace shall be a sufficient defence and support to his people. His throne is the heavens, his footstool is the earth, and his kingdom ruleth over all. He raises up one king, and puts down another. He so overrules the events of this world, that these kingdoms cannot hurt his church sooner

sooner nor farther than they are permitted by the Lord of lords and King of kings. He who says to the raging sea, Thus far shalt thou come, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed, with equal effect, and as little perceived by them, stills the tumults of the people, makes the wrath of man to praise him, and restrains the remainder of his wrath. The kingdom of truth, righteousness, peace, and joy, shall come, in spite of all opposition, from whatever quarter; because it is the kingdom of God, and his is the power which supports it.

The second is, that they that are with him, are called, and chosen, and faithful. Because these three qualities unite in their character, true Christians cannot be conquered. They may be killed by their enemies; but they will conquer even in dying. He that shall lose his life for my sake, faith Christ, shall save it. Persecutions may shake and overcome those persons who have no fixed rule of faith, worship, and obedience, those who have not felt the power of divine grace upon their souls, or those who are hypocritical in their profession. But, different is the character of those persons, who, with invincible fortitude and courage, follow the Lamb through good report and through bad report. They are called; they have heard the call of God, by his providence, and by his word; and have been obedient to the heavenly call. In

the sacred scriptures, they have a fixed and uniform standard of faith, of worship, and of obedience. They are chosen. "They are chosen vessels to bear the name of God, before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light." "They are those whom God hath from the beginning chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." They are such as God himself hath chosen, and therefore they cannot disappoint the choice of him who cannot be deceived. And they are faithful. They are strictly faithful to their profession and obligations as Christians. No worldly advantages or losses can shake their fidelity. Such men cannot be conquered, because no motive to apostacy can be proposed to their mind so strong as their sense of duty; and no power can be brought against them equal to that omnipotent power which supports them. He that is with them is greater than all that are against them. Their faithfulness not only renders them invincible, but hath also often proved the means of subduing their enemies. Their persecutors often admired and imitated the honesty, the courage, and the faith of those upright men, who cheerfully parted with property,

property, character, liberty, and life itself, rather than prove unfaithful to their Christian profession. They are faithful unto the death.

Verse 15th.—And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

In the symbolical language, the earth signifies the Roman empire, and waters signify a great collection of men in a fluctuating and unsettled state, as was formerly shewn. Hence, in the strictest agreement with that meaning of the term, the angel saith here, “that the waters in which the woman sitteth are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” That is, the city and church of Rome sits supreme over those nations and kingdoms into which the Western empire was divided. These are called multitudes, as well on account of the great number of these European kingdoms, as on account of the populousness of many of them; peoples and nations, on account of their different forms of civil government, some of them more free, and others of them more despotic; and tongues, on account of the great variety of languages which are spoken in these different kingdoms. Like waters made up of many drops,
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the collective body over whom Rome presides, is made up of many distinct kingdoms. Like waters fluctuating and unsettled, these different kingdoms are frequently at war with one another; and frequently change their boundaries, either by losing some of the territories of their own, or acquiring some of those of their neighbouring kingdoms. Unstable and fluctuating, as they were among themselves, Papal Rome for a long time sat supreme over them, both in temporal and spiritual affairs. Several of these kingdoms have indeed at the Reformation, and since that period, thrown off this haughty mistress. But this also was foretold in the following verse.

Verse 16th.—And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her with fire.

Though the ten kings were to give their strength and authority to Papal Rome for a considerable time, yet they are not to support her always. These kingdoms shall change their minds and conduct, and shall exert themselves with success in totally destroying her in a most violent manner. At the Reformation, several of these kingdoms turned
against

against Papal Rome, and wounded her deeply. Ever since that time, those who have remained in communion with her have greatly checked her power over them in ecclesiastical concerns; and have almost totally destroyed it in civil matters. In the course of providence, they will gradually go on more and more curtailing her power and abandoning her altogether, so that before the end of the year 1999 there will be very few Roman Catholic kingdoms in the world. The progress of commerce, learning, and liberty, will, under the guidance and blessing of divine providence and grace, teach men the most valuable of all liberty, liberty of conscience, and will raise man to the true dignity of his nature, the worship, obedience, and enjoyment of God in that way which God himself hath prescribed. In the year 1999, several of these kingdoms shall be engaged against Papal Rome in the war in which she shall be finally overthrown, along with the other parties mentioned under the sixth vial.

Verse 17th.—For God hath put it in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

This

This verse assigns the reason why these kingdoms shall support Papal Rome for a considerable time, and shall afterwards exert themselves with success to destroy her. The pointed and precise meaning of this verse is in a great degree lost by our translation. The original is as follows. *Ο γαρ Θεος ἔθηκεν εἰς τὰς καρδίας αὐτῶν ποιῆσαι τὴν γνώμην αὐτοῦ, ἢ ποιῆσαι μίαν γνώμην, ἢ δεῖναι τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτῶν τῷ θειῷ, ἄχρι τέλεος τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ Θεοῦ*; which is thus exactly translated, “For God hath put it into their hearts to execute his own sentence, to execute one sentence, “even to give their kingdom unto the beast, until “the words of God shall be fulfilled.” The plain meaning of this most pointed reason for their conduct is, that that God who governs the world; in whose hand the king’s heart is; and who turns it as the rivers of water whithersoever he will, without any restraint upon his moral powers, hath so disposed things in the course of his providence, that these kings shall even with a willing mind act as the executioners of the sentence of God against Papal Rome, even of this one sentence, that they shall give the power of their kingdoms to Papal Rome, until the words of God shall be fulfilled; but no longer.

The words of God signify not one, but several predictions of God concerning Papal Rome. Some of these predictions referred to, and were fulfilled at the Reformation. There were to be
 wars

wars and a revolution then, as in chap. xi. 13. Some of these kings were then necessary to execute that part of the sentence against Rome; for that word of prediction was then fulfilled. Others of these predictions, such as the sixth and seventh vials, chap. xvi. 12,—21. foretel wars, a revolution, and the total overthrow of Papal Rome. Some of these kings shall be necessary to assist in executing this part of the sentence, and they shall as certainly step forward as executioners of it as some of their number did at the Reformation.

Let us here admire, adore, and confide in the superintendency of divine providence over the world. In the view given of divine providence in this verse, and verified in the history of the European kingdoms, we behold individuals and kingdoms, with the most minute exactness, executing the sentences which God had long before pronounced and published by the mouth of his prophets. We may behold them strictly executing the sentence of God, without knowing or intending it; acting freely from the natural impressions of surrounding circumstances, and yet not deviating a single iota from the sentence of God in the execution of it. This is that divine superintendency which governs the world properly, in spite of devils and wicked men; which is never at a loss for the fittest executioners of its sentences, whether they be good or bad men, individuals or

collective bodies; without taking away the moral liberty of men, or destroying the virtue of the good, or the vice of the bad. To the men of Israel who crucified Jesus, Peter says, Acts ii. 23. "Him being delivered by the *determinate counsel* and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by *wicked hands* have crucified and slain."

Let us admire and adore that divine wisdom, which not in mere speculation, but in fact, reconciles the foreknowledge and pre-determination of God with the moral agency of men in the administration of divine providence. Let no man fear, that the excellency of his good conduct will be diminished, because he is only executing the purposes of God; for the highest excellency of an intelligent and accountable creature is to conform to the unerring will of his Creator. Let no wicked man imagine, that his conduct in any particular instance hath not been criminal, because he hath acted as an executioner of the sentences of God. No wicked man ever did a wicked action from the intention of executing the will of God; no wicked man ever did a sinful action but from an evil intention, in forming which he acted freely; no wicked man, therefore, can plead, as an apology for a bad action, what was not in his intention at the time of acting. Those persons who apprehended and crucified Christ executed a sentence of God, in crucifying him who was delivered by the *determinate counsel*

counsel and foreknowledge of God ; but they did it not from the intention of executing the will of God ; they did it not as mere machines from external constraint ; but they did it voluntarily from a wicked intention, and therefore they did it with *wicked hands*.

Let wise and good men, in an honest endeavour, by the blessing of God, to do their duty, repose themselves and all their concerns, public and private, with a calm and firm trust in divine providence. Let them never despair of the church of Christ, nor of the success of truth, righteousness, peace, and joy in the world. The wisest, the best, and the most powerful of beings governs and judges the world. His sentences are always the very best, and he is never at a loss for proper executioners of them. The kingdoms of Europe supported Papal Rome until it was raised to the greatest height, and the same kingdoms have for a long time past been pulling her down ; and whenever the secret but effectual command of God shall be given, they shall assist in totally overthrowing her. We cannot always see the wisdom of the divine administration, not because it is unwise at any time, but because it is often too high for our limited faculties to perceive it clearly. But we may always rest in this as a never failing maxim in the divine administration, that all God's works are done in wisdom, and that the Judge of all the earth ever does that

which is right. "The Lord reigneth, let the
"earth rejoice, let the multitude of the isles be
"glad thereof; clouds and darknes are round a-
"bout him, righteousness and judgement are the
"habitation of his throne."

Verse 18th.—And the woman which thou
sawest, is that great city which reigneth over
the kings of the earth.

This verse finishes the key or explication which
the angel gave to John. And indeed this is one
so singular and striking, that he who will not be
convinced by it that the woman is the city of
Rome under the Papal government, it is probable
will not be convinced by any other evidence. The
woman signifies not a great city in general, but in
particular that great city which reigneth over the
kings of the earth. There is one city, and only
one in the whole world, and for a determinate pe-
riod of her history, to whom this description exact-
ly agrees.

Rome is a great city, and, in point of dominion,
the greatest city that ever was in the world: but
as there are other great cities in the world, the ap-
pellation, a great city, would not have authoris'd
us to fix upon Rome. But this great city reign-
eth over the kings of the earth; that is, those kings

or

or kingdoms which rose up in the western Roman empire. When John wrote this verse, there was not a city in the whole world that reigned over independent kingdoms, nor since his day hath any city appeared which corresponds to this description, except the city of Rome. The jurisdiction of all the governments in the world is confined within their own kingdom, excepting that of Papal Rome. It is so inconsistent with the nature of civil government, that the jurisdiction of one kingdom should extend over another independent kingdom, that no such thing was ever known in the world in fact till about 600 years after John wrote this verse; and I am persuaded the idea, so unlike every thing which men had seen or heard, could not have entered into the mind of any man, but by divine inspiration. A city to reign with absolute sway over many independent kingdoms, and they still to continue independent kingdoms, is an idea which in the days of John could have been derived only from inspiration; an idea which hath since that time been verified only in the history of Papal Rome. After the dissolution of the Western empire by the northern nations, and a short time before the Papal government was erected in Rome, the Western empire was parcelled out into many distinct kingdoms, governed by laws and constitutions of their own, quite independent of one another, and of any foreign power. The number,

ber, extent, situation, and even constitutions of these kingdoms changed; but still many distinct and independent kingdoms continued within the limits of the antient Western empire. But, it is universally known that, till the Reformation in the 16th century, Papal Rome reigned over all these kingdoms with an absolute sway, both in civil and religious affairs. There was nothing in the constitution or laws of those kingdoms which destroyed or limited their independence, or which vested Rome with a supremacy over them. Papal Rome assumed the self-created power, and wreathed the chains of slavery, forged by the hands of superstition in the dark ages, about the necks of independent kingdoms; and there never was another city or kingdom which reigned over independent kingdoms; Rome, therefore, must be that great city represented by the woman in the vision. But this description agrees to Rome only in one particular period of her history. She could reign over the kings of the earth only when the empire was parcelled out among independent kings, but this was only during the time of Papal Rome, as all history declares. Heathen Rome, indeed, conquered many countries and reigned over them, but she did not reign over any of them as an independent kingdom. She reduced them to the state of conquered provinces, deposed their own kings, and sent them laws and governors of
her

her own. She reigned over many conquered provinces; but it could not be said of her that she reigned over the kings of the earth.

The whole strain of this book fixes the period of the reign of Rome over the kings of the earth to the time of Papal Rome. In this chapter, verse 3d, the scene of this vision in which the woman and the beast appear, is the *wildernefs* state of the church: but the wildernefs state of the church, as was formerly shewn, is cotemporary and commensurate with that of Papal Rome. In said vision, the woman rides upon the beast; but, as was formerly shewn, the beast is the Papal hierarchy, and arose at the time of the ten kings, in the year 756. The woman therefore, must be Papal Rome, because the beast could not carry her before it had existence. In chap. xiii. 1. this beast is said to have ten crowns upon his ten horns, and no crowns upon his heads, but upon them the names of blasphemy. But, in chap. xii. 13. the dragon is said to have seven heads with crowns upon them; and ten horns, but not a word about crowns upon them. The latter of these beasts, as was formerly shewn, signifies Heathen Rome when Rome itself wore the crown, but none of the horns were crowned heads; and the former signifies Papal Rome when all the ten horns were crowned heads, and Rome itself had no crown, but, in place of it the blasphemous titles of *His Holiness*, and *The Vicar of Christ*.

Let

Let us here pause a little, and review the many important and striking events which are predicted in the last ten verses of this chapter, and the wonderful manner in which they have all in fact happened and conspired to afford the most incontestable evidence, that the beast with the seven heads and ten horns, and the names of blasphemies upon his heads, is the Papal hierarchy; and that the woman who sits on that beast, is the city of Rome during its Papal state.

1st, There hath been seven distinct forms of civil government in Rome; and the city of Rome hath been the seat of every one of them.

2d, The Papal is the seventh of these forms.

3d, Between the imperial and Papal forms of government, Rome was ruled by the Exarch of Ravenna for near 200 years, who had his seat of government in Ravenna, and not in the city of Rome.

4th, A very short time before the rise of the Papal government, ten independent kingdoms sprang up in the Western empire.

5th, However much these kingdoms differed among themselves in other things, they all united in supporting the Papal power.

6th, These kingdoms long persecuted, but could not destroy the true church of Christ; and many of them have since embraced and supported that religion which they had long persecuted.

7th,

7th, Many of these kingdoms have, long ago, turned their whole force against Papal Rome; and the greatest part of the remainder of them are gradually checking her power over them, both in civil and religious affairs.

8th, From a short time after the erection of the Papal government until the Reformation, the city of Rome actually reigned over all the independent kingdoms, which arose within the ancient boundaries of the Western empire.

All these eight events, great, striking, and some of them most uncommon, and, before they happened, in themselves highly improbable, were predicted in these verses, by John, above six hundred years before the rise of the Papal government. They were all previously fixed upon as marks, by which it should be known that the beast signified Papal Rome; and they all happened in the most strict correspondence to the predictions. Is it therefore possible to conceive a more full, pointed, and conclusive proof from prophecy, than that which these events and the predictions of them afford, that the beast is Papal Rome? Such a government as that of Papal Rome hath in fact existed, and hath made a very great uncommon, and distinguished figure in the world, since the year 756. Rome claims to be the only true church of Christ in the world, and her worship to be the only right worship of Christians. In this en-

lightened age of the world, there are few men, who seriously believe that the worshipping of images, the invocation of saints, pilgrimages, penances, and the like, are the worship of that God, who is only worshipped when worshipped in spirit and in truth; or the ordinances, instituted by Christ, in that gospel recorded in the inspired scriptures of the New Testament. Was it not, then, very reasonable to expect that, in a chain of prophecies relative to great and important events, from the days of the apostles to the end of the world, a kingdom and church, so great, so lasting, and so extraordinary, should be particularly noticed? What event hath happened in the world, since the date of this book, so great in itself, and in which both the civil and religious interests of mankind have been so deeply interested, as the rise, progress, height, and decline of Papal Rome? When lesser events were made the subject of prophecy, is it not unreasonable to suppose, that this great and interesting one should pass unnoticed? If it is predicted at all, can it be supposed that such a system of error, superstition, persecution, pride, and tyranny, would have been mentioned with approbation by the spirit of God? Can any intelligent and unprejudiced person allow himself to imagine, that the spirit of God would foretell the church of Rome as the true church of Christ, or the Papal hierarchy as the kingdom of God?

Or

Or can he suppose, that the spirit of God would give any other character of that mystery of iniquity, than that which is given of Papal Rome in this book, under the hieroglyphic of the beast with the seven heads and the ten horns; of the woman who sitteth upon that beast; and of Babylon the great, the great mother of idolatry and superstition in the earth?

VISION XI.

C H A P. XVIII.

Verses 1st, 2d, 3d. **A**ND after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

This chapter, in point of order and of time, is connected with the end of the 16th chapter. In the end of that chapter, we were informed, that
Papal

Papal Rome or mystical Babylon should be totally overthrown, in the end of the year 1999. This chapter gives us a full account of that fall, and of the manner in which it shall affect the votaries of Rome. The intermediate seventeenth chapter is a kind of explanatory episode by which the narrative is interrupted for a little, but which, not predicting any new events, takes up no additional time. In it an angel is introduced, according to the idiom of prophetic language, to give an infallible explication of the preceding part of the prophecy.

In this chapter, the final overthrow of Papal Rome is predicted and described in terms very similar to those in which the destruction of antient Babylon is predicted by the prophets, Isaiah in chap. xlvii. and Jeremiah in chap. l. and li. These terms are used, because Babylon was a type of Papal Rome; that prediction was one of the final overthrow of Babylon, and this of that of Rome, and that men might thereby be led to compare the predictions by Isaiah and Jeremiah of the destruction of antient Babylon with the real history of Babylon, and its situation ever since so conformable to these predictions; and from what happened to Babylon, that they might learn beforehand what shall happen to Rome, since God predicted the overthrow of both; governs the world at both
these

these periods, and is equally powerful at all times.

The certainty of the fall of Rome is intimated by the repetition of it. She shall become an heap of ruins, to which nothing but frightful and solitary ravenous beasts and birds shall resort. The greatness of her idolatries and superstitions, the extensive influence which they have had on kings and people through the western world, and the unjust gain which her spiritual office-bearers, called the merchants of the earth, have accumulated, by making merchandise of mens souls, are the causes of her fall.

Verses 4th, 5th.—And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

When the fall of Rome shall be just at hand, the state of divine providence shall give the last call to any of the people of God, who have still adhered to her, to abandon her without delay, lest they should share of her sins and of her plagues. How long some serious and well disposed persons may adhere to Papal Rome, being misled by necessary

cessary ignorance, and how many calls of divine providence to come out of her they may resist, and yet be the people of God, it is not our province to say. They are in the hands of that God, who is perfectly wise, merciful, and just; and who will at last pass that sentence upon them, which even they themselves must acknowledge to be perfectly right. But the whole strain of this book declares the miserable and hopeless situation of those, who adhere to Papal Rome, under that dispensation of divine providence, which introduces her final overthrow.

“They shall receive of her plagues.” Relative to this very period, it is said, in chap. xvi. 15. “Behold, I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth.” And in chap. xiv. 8,—11. this awful truth is stated at full length. To these passages, and to the commentary upon them, the reader is referred.

The punishment of Rome shall be great, because her iniquities are great. It shall then be delayed no longer, because the measure of her iniquities shall be filled up.

Ver. 6th—19th. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. How much

much she hath glorified her self, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burnt with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth who have committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city: for in one hour is thy judgement come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth her merchandise any more: the merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil,

oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after, are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly, are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas ! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones and pearls : For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city ? And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her costliness ; for in one hour is she made desolate.

In these verses, it is predicted at great length and in most striking terms, that Papal Rome shall be fully punished for the great injuries which she had done to the people of God for a long time. The greatness of her fall shall be in proportion to the height of luxury and pride to which she had arisen. Her best, most steady, and powerful friends, those of the kings of the earth who shall adhere to her to the last, shall be unable to give her any effectual support, and shall be able only to weep and wail for her helpless and miserable situation. The merchants of the earth shall then weep, because Rome no longer continues a mart for all the necessities and luxuries in which they traded. Especially the spiritual office-bearers, who with peculiar propriety are stiled the merchants of the Papal kingdom, shall mourn, because no man buyeth their merchandise.

The articles of merchandise are enumerated in verses 12th and 13th. These are the articles for which the ornaments of the Papal churches and the luxuries of Rome cause so great a demand. The last two are not very common articles of merchandise, excepting with the office-bearers of Papal Rome, "slaves", or as it is in the original, *σωμάτων*; that is, *bodies*, and "souls of men." In these two articles Papal Rome hath dealt largely, and hath made most extravagant profits on them. The *bodies* of men were an extensive article of trade in her store of holy relicts. And of the
souls

souls of men she made merchandise to a great extent, in the large sums of money which she received for delivering them out of purgatory. All those persons, in short, who are her tools of any kind, and who made profit in her service, shall lament her destruction, from a principle of selfishness, because their lucrative trade must fall with her.

Verse 20th.—Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.

Three distinct bodies of men are called upon to rejoice over fallen Rome. *1st*, The *heaven*, that is, the true church of Christ. *2d*, The *holy apostles*, the twelve apostles of Christ. And *3d*, The *holy prophets*, that is, the prophets of both the Old and New Testament, particularly Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Peter, Paul, and John; who have all prophesied of the latter days.

The cause assigned for their rejoicing is, that God hath avenged them on her. Christians, so far from avenging themselves, pity and pray for their very persecutors. But, the injuries which are done them escape not vengeance from him who perfectly knows them all, and who with equal ease can punish the strongest and weakest of their enemies. (Rom. xii. 19.) “Dearly beloved, avenge

“not yourselves, but rather give place unto
“wrath; for it is written, vengeance is mine, I
“will repay, saith the Lord.” By the final overthrow of Papal Rome, God shall, in the course of his providence, fully avenge all these on her.

She represented and persecuted the Christian church as heretical; but that church shall then be fully avenged on her, when she shall be destroyed by the Turks, and by several of those kingdoms in Europe who formerly worshipped her, while the whole course of divine providence shall clearly declare, and almost the whole world shall openly acknowledge that church which she denominated heretical, to be the church of Christ.

Christ commanded his apostles and ministers to admit members into his church, by baptizing them, and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. But the church of Rome omitted many things which Christ commanded his apostles to teach, and enjoined upon her votaries many articles of faith, and rules of worship and of conduct, which Christ never commanded, and which his apostles never taught. The Christian church is built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. But, the church of Rome is built upon her traditions and councils, the Pope himself being the chief corner stone. When, therefore, the church and city of Rome shall be
overthrown,

overthrown, and that church which is built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, shall appear in a triumphant state, then the holy apostles shall be avenged on Papal Rome.

The prophets of the Old and New Testaments, particularly Daniel, Paul, and John, predicted the rise, the height, and the downfall of Papal Rome. Rome, like even too many who call themselves Protestants, hath treated the prophecies with contempt or neglect, as unintelligible and useless, and hath applied them to others and not to herself. But, as the events themselves will not misinterpret the prophecies nor represent them as useless, when not only all the intermediate events, but also the final catastrophe of Rome shall exactly correspond to the predictions of these prophets; then, in the course of divine providence, they shall be fully avenged on Rome, and on all others who had treated their prophecies with contempt or neglect.

Verses 21st,—24th.—And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of what-
foever

soever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee : and the found of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee ; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee ; and the voice of the bridegroom, and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee : for thy merchants were the great men of the earth ; for by thy forceries were all nations deceived : and in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

The total and final overthrow of Papal Rome is here predicted by the symbol of throwing a great millstone into the sea, as a visible representation that Rome should be overthrown in a most violent manner, never to rise again. Such visible representations being a part of the idiom of the symbolical language, are very common in prophetic writings. That this overthrow shall be final, is farther predicted by a most minute and particular declaration, that all the necessary, the useful, the ornamental, and the amusing arts should totally disappear ; and that there should be no rising generation in Rome to fill up the vacant places of those persons who had perished.

In

In the last clause of the 23d verse, and in the whole of the 24th, three reasons are assigned for this fatal overthrow.

1st, "For her merchants were the great men of the earth." The office-bearers in the church of Rome assumed a rank in the state, and an influence in the administration of civil government, unsuitable to the character of ministers in Christ's church.

2d, "By her forceries all nations were deceived." By her superstitions, idolatries, and artful impostures and tricks, all nations were led into dangerous errors in matters of religion.

And 3d, Because "in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, even of all that were slain upon the earth." In her unjust and cruel persecutions, the blood of the ministers and of the hearers of the gospel was shed in the greatest profusion, even the blood of all those persons who for their adherence to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus were slain in every part of the Roman empire. The number of these is past counting, and the shocking cruelties committed in the manner of their deaths were such, as for the sake of human nature ought never to be named. That Rome for a long time hath been deep stained with these three atrocious crimes, none can doubt, who are not either grossly ignorant or prejudiced. That these three crimes, when they
rise

rise to a great height in any city or kingdom, especially when they are enacted and enforced by law, are a sufficient reason for the total destruction of that city or kingdom, must be equally evident to every person who hath a just sense of good and evil, of the nature of the moral government of God over the world, and of that of states or collective bodies of men in this world.

CHAP. XIX.

VISION XII.

Verses 1st,—4th.

AND after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia ; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgements ; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders. and the four beasts fell down, and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen ; Alleluia.

The events predicted in this chapter shall immediately succeed those which have been foretold in the preceding one. They relate to the triumph

of the Christian church, which cannot precede, but must immediately succeed the final overthrow of Papal Rome.

John heard a great voice of much people. In the original, it is, "He heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude." It is the same word (*ὄχλος*) which in chap. vii. is translated multitude, and the same persons are signified by it in both places; even the church of Christ, in its enlarged state, after the downfall of Rome, when the Jews with the fullness of the Gentiles shall be brought unto her.

This great multitude shall be in *heaven*; that is, in the Christian church. This great multitude shall then give praise to God, as expressive of their triumph and joy. They shall begin their song with the Hebrew word Allelujah, which signifies, *praise God*; to signify that then the Jew and the Gentile shall unite in worshipping God in the same church. They shall then praise God as the Lord, the supreme Ruler of the universe, and as *their* God, whom they only have worshipped and served. To God, in these characters, they ascribe salvation, because he shall then work out a wonderful and complete deliverance for his church from Rome and all her other enemies:—glory, because the nature and manner of that deliverance shall illustriously display the glory of God, even the united lustre of all his perfections;

tions ;—honour, because it shall then fully appear that he is the proper object of all honour, reverence, and worship, and because men shall then worship him with filial honour and affection. Mal. i. 6. “ A son honoureth his father. If then I be a “ father, where is mine honour? saith the Lord of “ hosts ;”—and power, because the omnipotence of his power shall then appear in the total overthrow of all those boasted powers, by which Rome and all the other enemies of his church had so long attempted in vain to destroy her.

The reason and occasion of that joy and triumph are the final judgement or overthrow of Papal Rome. She is described here by the same character which is given of her in chap. xvii. 1, 2. By these judgements she shall be punished for corrupting the Roman empire with her superstition and idolatry ; and for spilling the blood of those who are the servants of God, who in matters of religion had worshipped and served God only, and had obeyed God rather than man, whenever their commands came in competition with each other.

These judgements are called true, because the event shall then clearly shew that they exactly correspond to the predictions of God by the mouth of his prophets, particularly of Daniel, of Paul, and of John ;—and righteous, because they shall exactly correspond in kind and degree to the crimes of Papal Rome. Since Rome so keenly

attempted to overthrow that church of Christ which is the kingdom of God, is it not right that her church and kingdom should be overthrown? As Rome, in so cruel, unjust, and profuse a manner hath shed the blood of saints, it is right that in her overthrow the blood of her citizens should be shed; not by the brethren of these saints, but by wicked men, who, without intending it, shall act as the executioners of the sentence of that God who hath said, "whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." As that idolatry and persecution were committed by Rome, in its collective capacity as a state, and flowed from the very constitution of the Papal hierarchy, it is right that that kingdom should be punished for them in its collective capacity, by the disgraceful and final overthrow of its constitution of church and state in this world. For it cannot exist, and consequently cannot be punished in that capacity in a future state. In a future state, every individual person must answer for his own conduct to the righteous and final Judge of the world, and among others every individual in the Papal empire must answer for himself. Then the most strict justice shall be administered to every one. None shall fare better nor worse than he ought to do, every circumstance of his situation, and every quality in his character, being exactly weighed.

The

The repetition of this song of praise in verse 3d, predicts the great certainty and height of that joy, with which the church of Christ shall be blessed at that period. That that overthrow of Papi Rome shall be her final destruction, is signified by “her smoke rising up for ever and ever.”

The persons, mentioned in verse 4th, are called not *elders* and *beasts*, but *the elders* and *the beasts*, because they are not new persons introduced in this place for the first time, but are characters formerly described and well-known in this book. They are the same four and twenty elders, and the same four beasts or living creatures, (ζωα), which were introduced and fully described in chapter iv. 4,—11. It was formerly shewn, that these 24 elders represent the Christian church, and the four living creatures represent the gospel ministry in four successive periods. The events which shall then take place shall clearly appear to be the answers of the prayers of the saints and ministers of God, during the preceding period of 1243 years; particularly of these prayers put into their mouths by Christ himself: “Our Father
“ who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy
“ kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is
“ in heaven.” Then shall their Amen be granted, when the name of God shall every where be hallowed, when Christ’s kingdom or reign on earth, that is, the millennium, shall commence, and when
men

men shall in that happy period do the will of God on earth as it is in heaven: Then these prayers shall be converted into songs of praise, Alleluia. Instead of praying "thy kingdom come," they shall sing "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Instead of praying "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," the voice from the throne shall say unto them, "Praise our God all ye his servants."

All those Christians and ministers of Christ's church who shall be alive on the earth at the commencement of the millennium, shall join with the great multitude of worshippers, newly introduced into the church by the conversion of the Jews and the bringing in of the fullness of the Gentiles, in giving their Amen or sincere assent to the song of praise contained in verses 1st and 2d, and particularly in ascribing all these blessings to the providence and grace of God.

Verses 5th,—8th.—And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God all ye his servants, and ye that fear him both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice,

joice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen white and clean: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

The throne mentioned in ver. 4. 5. is the throne introduced and described in chap. iv. 2, 3. In chap. iv. He that sat upon the throne is symbolically described; but that we may not mistake the import of the symbol, it is plainly and literally said, in ver. 4. of this chapter, that "God sat upon the throne" Hence the voice from the throne, is a voice from God who sitteth upon the throne. The commands of God must all be obeyed. The plain meaning of this voice therefore is, that then all who really fear and serve God shall be in a most happy situation, whatever their station in life may be, and shall, with grateful hearts, praise him for all his goodness to his church and people. Then the reign of God on earth shall commence. "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Though the providence of God superintends the world in every age; yet, in a very peculiar manner, God is said, in sacred scripture, to reign, when the gospel of Christ, filed

filed the kingdom of God, shall be triumphant in the world.

This reign or kingdom of God, which is the millenium state of the church, shall commence upon the final overthrow of Papal Rome. This kingdom of God was first predicted in Daniel ii. 31,—45. but especially in verse 44. “And in the days of these kings shall the
“ God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall
“ never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not
“ be left to other people; but it shall break in
“ pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it
“ shall stand for ever.” It is also predicted in Daniel vii. 13, 14. and particularly in verse 27. “And the kingdom and dominion, and the great-
“ nefs of the kingdom under the whole heaven,
“ shall be given to the people of the saints of the
“ Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting
“ kingdom; and all dominion shall serve and o-
“ bey him.” Thus introduced into sacred scripture, there is not any appellation which is more frequently given to the church of Christ, in the writings of the New Testament, than “the kingdom of God.” The nature of this kingdom Paul thus describes: “The kingdom of God is
“ not meat and drink, but righteousness, and
“ peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,” Rom. xiv. 17. In Matth. vi. 10. Christ teaches his disciples to pray to God, “Thy kingdom come.” This

prayer his disciples have hitherto put up, and will continue to put up to God, until that kingdom shall come at the period referred to, when, in the words under our view, it is said, “the Lord
“ God omnipotent reigneth.”

Three things shall unite to prove the commencement of this reign. *1st*, The voice of a great multitude; even the united praises of the Jews and of the fullness of the Gentiles. *2d*, The voice of many waters. In chap. xvii. 15. the many waters are “the peoples, and multitudes, “ and nations, and tongues,” which were subject to Papal Rome: But even these shall then unite in praising God, and they shall be regulated by that righteousness, and shall partake of that peace and joy, which shall render them citizens of “the
“ kingdom of God.” And *3d*, the voice of mighty or powerful thunderings. Thunderings signify wars, and these mighty thunderings signify the great wars by which Papal Rome shall be finally overthrown. Hence the plain meaning of the whole is, that whenever these three great events shall happen at the same time, men may consider them as a certain sign that the millennium state of the Christian church is then commencing, and that that is a state of triumph, joy, and praise. For all these three voices say “Alle-
“ luia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

The commencement of this glorious period is represented in verse 7th, by the marriage of the Lamb being come, and his wife having made herself ready. Among the Jews, unmarried women lived in a state of great retirement, and never went abroad without a vail; the marriage ceremony was conducted with great magnificence and splendour, and after marriage the spouse shared in the rank and dignity of her husband, and appeared abroad without a vail. Hence, that enlargement, splendour, and glory, to which the church of Christ shall be raised at the commencement of the millennium, is beautifully expressed in the symbolical language, by "the marriage of the Lamb being come, and his wife having made herself ready."

In the preceding period, the outward appearance of the Christian church hath not been such as might have been expected of a church which had Christ himself for her head. She hath always appeared under a vail. But, at that period she shall rise to that state of purity and splendour, which shall fully and clearly prove her connection with Christ as her head. She shall then appear, in every respect as the church of Christ. This period and state of the Christian church is predicted both in the Old and New Testament, by the espousal of the church to Christ. See to this purpose, Isaiah liv. 1,—10. and Ephesians v. 23,

—27. and 32. It is said, that his wife hath made herself ready, and that she is arrayed in fine linen clean and white. We are told, that this fine linen is “the righteousness of saints.” The Lamb’s wife, therefore, who is arrayed in it, must be “the saints.”

Until that time, the church of Christ shall not be made *ready* for her triumphant millennium state. The two great features of that state are peace and joy. In it the church of Christ shall be blessed with uninterrupted peace, and with pure and exquisite joy. But, the preparation in the church which is absolutely necessary for enjoying these, is righteousness. Without righteousness, peace and joy cannot be long preserved or relished in any society of men. Hence, that kingdom of God is righteousness, before it is peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. This righteousness is what is here called “the righteousness of saints.” It is not that self-confident righteousness, which proceeds from that insensibility to the atrocity of sin, to the perfection of the divine law, and to the justice of God, and from that pride which are inconsistent with the character of saints. It is not that merely ceremonial righteousness, which may be performed by the sinner as well as by the saint; but it is the perfect righteousness of Christ, on which alone the saints of God rely for the expiation of their guilt, and the internal, real, universal, per-

manent, and progressive righteousness, produced in their souls by the agency of the Spirit of God, the belief of the truth, and the sincere and diligent practice of their duty, which form the very character of saints or holy persons. This righteousness is not yet so general in the world, as is necessary to fit men for the millennium state; and the church of Christ herself is not yet fully prepared for that state. So much ignorance, error, superstition, bigotry, infidelity, profanity, enthusiasm, and sin prevail in the world, and so many grains of these are still to be found about the best of men, that neither the world nor the church of Christ are yet prepared for a state of perfect peace and exquisite joy. Mankind are so constituted, that, so long as unrighteous, they are incapable of preserving or enjoying a state of pure peace and joy.

In the whole universe, there is not a single instance of a society of intelligent and moral creatures who are righteous, that enjoy not uninterrupted peace and joy; nor of a society of such creatures who are unrighteous, that live in a state of pure peace and joy. "There is no peace, saith God, unto the wicked."

But could not God have prepared the church and the world much sooner for that millennium of peace and joy? Certainly, in a miraculous way God could have prepared them in any space of time.

time, however short. In how much shorter time God could have prepared them without a miracle, it is not our province to determine. But, both fact and the nature of the thing gives us very full assurance, that a great length of time was necessary, at least most proper, to prepare the world and the church for such a state of peace and joy, as shall commence with the millennium. That state is not yet in fact come; and from prophecy it is evident that it shall not arrive for above two hundred years. Neither hath the world yet arrived at those attainments in truth and righteousness, which would render such a state a blessing to them. If we admit that the world is under the government of God, we must allow this fact to be a proof of the will of God; and consequently, of the fitness and propriety of a great length of time for preparing the world and the church of Christ for that state. This still farther appears from the nature of the thing. The qualifications which both scripture and reason declare to be necessary to fit men for that state of peace and joy, are the righteousness of the saints, just and high attainments in truth and righteousness, and these, if not universal, at least very general in the world. But, all improvements of the intellectual, moral, and religious kind, must be the effect of that rational conviction and approbation, which are produced by that kind of evidence which does not controul

controul or suspend, but which leads the intellectual and moral powers of man to make a voluntary choice, in consequence of a moral persuasion. All external compulsion is inconsistent with, and destructive of the nature of real knowledge, true religion, and pure righteousness. Hence, to bring the bulk of mankind to the attainment of truth and righteousness, in that way which is suited to the nature of such attainments, much time is necessary. In religion, as in most other things, mankind in general run from the one extreme to the other, before they settle in the right medium. In the dark ages, mankind ran to the extreme of bigotry, superstition, and enthusiasm. In the present century, they have run to the opposite extreme of scepticism, infidelity, excessive refinement, and indifference. Like a pendulum; they must, in the nature of the thing, vibrate from the one of these points to the other; gradually in process of time making their vibrations shorter, until they shall settle in that true religion which is equally distant from both these extremes; that religion which is truth and righteousness, and which is therefore every way worthy of God as its author, and fit for man to believe and practise; that religion, which whenever it becomes nearly universal, must undoubtedly prepare the world for a state of universal peace and joy. When we reflect on the various vibrations from one side to another in matters of religion,

gion, and on the slow but real progress of knowledge and righteousness in the world, in consequence of these, for the last two hundred years, since the Reformation from Popery ; judging from analogy, we have good reason to conclude, that the remaining two centuries will be neither too short nor too long a space of time, for fully correcting all these faulty extremes, and bringing mankind to those high attainments in truth and righteousness which shall qualify them for the millennium state of peace and joy.

Let us here contemplate and adore the wisdom, the justice, and the mercy of God in the government of the world, and of his church. God does not thrust in his sickle, until the harvest of the earth is ripe. Papal Rome shall not be overthrown, until her sins shall have reached unto heaven ; full time is allowed for repentance, and destruction falls on the impenitent only. Some may think, that the millennium state is at too great a distance, and that a state of peace and joy hath been delayed too long. But, it is delayed no longer than until the world and the church of Christ shall be prepared for it. And, should it come sooner, it could not be a state of happiness to men, because they would not be qualified to enjoy it. Let none, therefore, blame God because his kingdom is so long in coming : but let them blame themselves, that they are so long in becoming fit
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for it, though they are favoured with all those evidences and aids which are consistent with the nature of truth and virtue in the present state of man.

Verse 9th.—And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they who are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

The very commencement of the millennium, here stiled the marriage supper of the Lamb, shall be glorious; and those persons who shall then be members of Christ's church, shall be highly blessed. Of all the preceding predictions it is declared, "these are the true sayings of God." They are not the conjectures of men who may err, and who cannot look with certainty into futurity, but they are the predictions of that God to whom all times and places are ever present, and whose power is fully able to accomplish all his predictions. They are true, and therefore shall be accomplished. At that time shall be accomplished the various predictions contained in this and the eight preceding verses, respecting the glorious and happy state of the church of Christ at the end of the year 1999 and the beginning of the year 2000, when Anti-christ shall be overthrown, the Jews and the fullness of the Gentiles shall be brought into the Christian

Christian church, and when the world in general, and the church of Christ in particular, shall be fully prepared for the glorious millennium state which shall then commence.

Verse 10th.—And I fell at his feet to worship him : and he said unto me, See thou do it not : I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus : worship God : for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

When the angel had finished this narrative, John fell at his feet in order to worship him. Some are of opinion that he did not intend to worship the angel, but only to pay him civil respect, by prostration ; according to the manners of the east. It is true, that the word in the original sometimes signifies civil respect as well as religious worship : But, it is evident from the reply of the angel, that he understood that John intended to have paid him religious worship. First, he tells him that he must not worship him, because he is his fellow servant. This is an unanswerable reason why he ought not to be worshipped ; for no creature, no servant of God is the proper object of religious worship. But, that he was the fellow-servant of John was no reason why he should not pay him

civil respect and homage. It is only to our fellow creatures that we can pay such respect ; and certainly it is not the less due to any of them because they are the faithful servants of God. And next he says to him, " worship God," using the very same word in the original which is used in the first clause of the verse for worshipping the angel ; as if he had said, I am not God ; I am only like thyself, a servant of God ; thou knowest that God is the sole object of religious worship, worship him therefore, and him only. If thou art thankful for the important discoveries which I have now made to thee, offer thy praise to God, whose servant I am in this business.

The whole context puts it out of doubt that John intended to have paid religious worship to the angel. But, it does not appear that he knew or believed him to be a created angel. Most probably, he believed, or at least apprehended that this angel was Jesus Christ himself. Christ is stiled the messenger, that is, the angel of the covenant, in Malachi iii. 1. and an angel, four times in chap. x. of this book. And, indeed as the prophet of his church, as the *λογος*, or word of God, the revealer of the Father, and of the Father's will to mankind, though uncreated, he is stiled the angel of the Lord, with the strictest propriety. Apprehending that this angel might be Christ, and knowing that Christ in his divine nature is the proper object of religious worship, not only to men, but al-

so to all the angels of God, (Heb. i. 6.) he thought it his duty to fall down before that angel, in order to worship him.

Probably he reasoned thus with himself: It is highly probable that this personage is Christ; if it is he, it is my duty to fall prostrate to worship him; but if this is only a created angel, certain as I am from the message which he brings, and from the impressions of divine inspiration upon my mind, that he is a good angel, he will hinder me from worshipping him; therefore, the safest way for me to act in the present state of my mind, is to fall down before him. Accordingly, the angel hindered John from worshipping him, telling him that he was his fellow-servant, and thus convincing him, that he was not Christ the object of religious worship. The angel calls himself the fellow-servant of John, and of John's brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. These brethren of John are the prophets, apostles, and faithful disciples of Christ, who all unite in giving their testimony to the world that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God. They are brethren, being by nature of the same order of creatures, and by grace the children of the same God. The angel, of a different order of beings, is not their brother; but serving the same master, in the same work of bearing testimony to Jesus, he is their fellow-servant. He is that angel, who in chap. i. 1. is said to be sent

by Jesus Christ to John ; and this is the work which is assigned to him there. In refusing religious worship from John, and telling him to worship God, he declares, that angels ought not to be worshipped, that God only is the object of religious worship, and that however grateful we are to angels or men for the blessings which are conveyed to us by their means, we must give those praises for them which are of the devotional kind to that God only whose instruments they were.

The angel next explains upon what principle he styles himself the fellow-servant of those who had the testimony of Jesus, when he is employed only in communicating prophecies to John, "for," (says he), the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of "prophecy." The very spirit and end of prophecy is to bear testimony to Jesus. Hence, by communicating prophecies to you, I am bearing testimony to Jesus, and employed in the same service with you and all others who bear testimony to Jesus. In these words, the angel gives the general key to prophecy. By it he removes the great objection, which infidel and ignorant men throw out against prophecy because of its obscurity. Say they, If the design of prophecy is to reveal future events to mankind, why are the predictions not expressed in such clear terms that all men may easily and certainly understand their meaning? But, it is not the principal design of prophecy to
reveal

reveal future events to all men ; and therefore it does not follow that the predictions should be expressed in such clear terms, that all men might clearly understand their meaning. The spirit of prophecy is to bear testimony to Jesus. This is its principal end and design ; and this end it may accomplish much better, when its predictions are expressed just as we find them in sacred scripture, than it could have done, had they been expressed in such clear terms, that all men could have understood their meaning before the event. We think more highly of ourselves than we ought to do, when we imagine that God sends his prophets merely to gratify our curiosity, by telling us beforehand the fate of empires and the fortunes of men. We know not ourselves, when we imagine that it would be advantageous for us to know, beforehand, the events which shall befall us through the whole of life. That God, who knows our frame, hath concealed these from us in mercy.

But to bear testimony to Jesus the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, is an object of sufficient dignity and importance for prophecy, and one the most beneficial to man. From the day, when it was said, “ the seed of the woman shall
“ bruise the serpent’s head,” to the last prophecy contained in this book, the great design and end of prophecy hath been to bear testimony either
to

to the birth, the life, the character, the natures, the offices, the sufferings, the death, the resurrection, the ascension, the religion of Jesus; or the various situations and conditions of his church. And, as the result of the whole, to afford proper evidence, in every age of the world, that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God, and that his religion is the kingdom of God; and, at last, to demonstrate these great truths in the most ample manner.

Such being the spirit of prophecy, it is reasonable to conclude, that the same candour and diligence are requisite to perceive the meaning and to feel the force of the testimony given by prophecy, which are necessary in order to understand and feel the force of the other testimonies in favours of Christ and of his religion. It ought, therefore, not to be surprising that the language of prophecy is unintelligible to the wicked, the prejudiced, or the careless. It would be just matter of surprise, were the case otherwise. Not the nature of the evidence, but the state of such persons minds renders them incapable of perceiving the true meaning, or of feeling the full force of this or of the other evidences of Christianity. Hence proceed their scepticism, their ignorance, their profanity, and their guilt.

Though the candid, the intelligent, and the inquisitive may, before the events, perceive the general meaning of prophecies, so far as is necessary
to

to support their faith and patience, yet it is to be expected from the whole analogy of Christianity, that their views of many of the more minute circumstances will be so dark as to exercise that faith and patience. But prophecy gives the fullest testimony to Jesus when it is accomplished. The events fully explain what is dark in the symbolical terms of the prediction; and, by that explication, prove the inspiration of the prophet, and consequently that his testimony in favours of Jesus is the testimony of God himself. It was thus, that the various events relative to the birth, the life, the sufferings, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus, removed that degree of obscurity which had long hung over the Jewish prophecies, and clearly proved Jesus to be the Messiah of whom Moses and all the prophets had spoken. In like manner, the various events which have already taken place relative to the church of Christ, explain the dark parts of the prophecies of Daniel, of Paul, and of John, so far as the times for their accomplishment are yet come; and thus bear testimony to the religion and church of Christ. And when Papal Rome shall be finally overthrown, when the scattered Jews, and the fullness of the Gentiles, shall be brought into the church of Christ, and the millennium shall commence, shall not these events fully remove any obscurity, which at present hangs over the predictions in
this

this chapter, and give such an irresistible testimony in favours of Jesus, and of his religion, as must put the sceptic and infidel to silence?

It is thus that prophecy, gradually fulfilling in a regular chain, becomes a kind of perpetual miracle, to give testimony to Jesus in every age of the world, until the consummation of all things. On this subject I must refer my reader to Dr Hurd's sermon on these words: "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;" being the second in the 1st volume of sermons preached by that great man at Warburton's lectures.

Here too I must transcribe a short passage on this subject from page 319 of the very excellent sermons preached by Mr Joseph White, Professor of Arabic in Oxford, before that University. "Through all their predictions, something pointing to the Messiah, either by direct application, or by secondary and distant reference, is so interwoven with the general contexture, the universal scheme of prophecy, that by keeping it in our eye we shall be furnished with a clue to trace out their ultimate design, and contemplate their mutual connection with and dependence on each other: "for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," This is its ruling and its vital principle. Divested of this, it loses its spirit and its power. The impression of its dignity is weakened, its object is debased, its end

“ is darkened. But, viewed in this light we behold in it a harmony which delights, a grandeur which astonishes; and from the result of the whole arises such evidence as carries conviction to the understanding.”

Verses 11th,—13th.—And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called faithful, and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself: and he was clothed with a vesture dipt in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

At that period, heaven, the church of Christ, shall be opened up. It shall be enlarged and exalted, far beyond the condition in which it appeared in the preceding period of 1243 years.

A horse and his rider is the hieroglyphic for a dispensation of divine providence. The particular nature of the dispensation is marked by the colour of the horse and the character of the rider, as was shewn in the commentary on chap. vi. This white horse and the same rider appeared on the opening of the first seal, chap. vi. 2. “ And I

“ saw, and behold a white horse, and he that sat
“ on him had a bow, and a crown was given un-
“ to him, and he went forth conquering and to
“ conquer.” It was shewn, in the commentary on
that verse, that the white horse was a dispensation
of purity and prosperity to the church of Christ;
that Christ was the rider; that, though not perso-
nally present, he then conducted his church, ac-
cording to the rules of that scripture which was
dictated by himself; that as king of his church
he had one crown; that as entering on a long state
of warfare, from which he should come off conquer-
or, he had a bow; that this hieroglyphic signi-
fied the apostolic age of the church of Christ, dis-
tinguished for purity, simplicity, and prosperity,
when all things in it were regulated by the re-
vealed will of Christ; before the termination of
which the church should enter upon a long
state of war. Since that time, the white horse
and his rider have never appeared in this book
until now. Now they appear again, the horse in
every respect the same he was at his former ap-
pearance; and the rider the same person, but ar-
rayed in greater grandeur. His dress at each time,
exactly corresponded to the time and occasion of
his appearance. At first he was entering upon a state
of war, and was therefore armed with a bow; and
as he is subject to and dependent on none, being a
king, he wore a crown. Now, having finished the
war,

war, conquered all his enemies, and returning in triumph, he hath laid aside his bow, and he hath many crowns on his head as the trophies of his victory and triumph over all his enemies. The symbolical language being as determinate and fixed as the alphabetical, the white horse here must signify the same purity, simplicity, and prosperity which he did under the first seal. It is evident from the whole context, that the beginning of the millennium is the period of time to which this second appearance of the white horse and his rider refers. Then the church of Christ shall again appear in this world in its primitive apostolic purity. Then the inspired scriptures shall be the infallible standard of faith, worship, obedience, and discipline to Christians. Equal in purity to the apostolic church, in prosperity and glory the Christian church of this period shall far excel it. This is signified by the description which is given of the rider. The various epithets given to him in these verses, fully prove that the rider is Christ. He will no more appear personally on earth at that time, than he did in the apostolic church after his ascension unto heaven, though he was represented riding upon the white horse under the first seal; but, he will then be regarded as the sole head of his church, though invisible. All the office-bearers in it will then act only ministerially under him, teaching his doctrines only, and enforcing his laws only;
and

and all the people will regard their obedience as paid to him.

Let us now consider the epithets, which are given to him. "He is called faithful and true." This appellation is given to Christ, Rev. i. 5. "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness."—iii. 7. "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true;"—and verse 14. "These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness." At that period it shall illustriously appear that he is faithful and true. All the promises which he had made to his church by the mouth of all his prophets, and particularly the great one, that they should reign as kings and priests on the earth, shall then be performed. It shall then appear, that all the judgements which he denounced upon their enemies, and all the calamities and trials to his church, which he foretold, have exactly taken place.

"And in righteousness he doth judge and make war." Then it shall appear, that all the judgements which he had inflicted upon Papal Rome, and all the wars by which she was overthrown, were strictly righteous. So many of these wars, as are already past, have not been carried on by Christians, in order to propagate truth and righteousness by the sword; nor shall these which are yet to come be carried on by such persons for such purposes. Such wars could not be righteous;

eous; because it never can be right, in any situation, to persecute for conscience sake, nor to teach men religion by fire and sword. The wars by which Papal Rome hath been shaken, and those by which she shall be overthrown at last, are wars carried on between different kingdoms as civil governments. No kingdom can fight against Rome, without suffering some of the calamities of war itself. But no kingdom hath fought or shall fight against Rome which is not highly criminal; and therefore these calamities are righteous, because not disproportioned to their crimes. Certainly the Turks shall suffer great calamities in the war by which they shall totally overthrow Papal Rome: But will any man say, that the Turks are so righteous a people, or that the votaries of Mahomet are such pure worshippers of God, that it would be unrighteous for them to feel the calamities of war.

“His eyes were as a flame of fire.” Jesus Christ is thus described, Rev. i. 14. “And his eyes were as a flame of fire.” He is there represented as the *Son of man*, as is evident from the preceding verse: and, in chap. ii. 18. where he is styled the *Son of God*, he is pointed out by the same description: “These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire.” The events, which shall take place at that period, shall fully prove that, with the most
bright

bright and penetrating eye, he hath looked through every disguise, vail, and cloud, to the real natures of things and characters of men, and hath always predicted and acted from the most intimate and perfect knowledge of all things.

“And on his head were many crowns.” The bow is now laid aside, because the wars, persecutions, and fightings of his church shall then be all over. In the apostolic age he had one crown. He was then, and he hath ever continued to be the king of Zion, though his subjects were frequently very few. But now he hath conquered all his enemies, and returns from the war carrying the crowns of all the conquered kings, as trophies of his complete victory and triumph. The enemies of Christ and his church are all enumerated, and ranked under three distinct classes in Ephesians vi. 12. “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood; but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

The nature of all these enemies of Christ's church will be much better known by consulting this verse in the original, which runs thus: *Ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμῖν ἡ πάλη πρὸς σῆμα καὶ σάρκα, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὰς ἀρχάς, πρὸς τὰς ἐξουσίας, πρὸς τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, πρὸς τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις.* The proper translation of which is: “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood; but against principalities,

“ cipalities, against powers, against the worldly
 “ princes of the darknes of this age, against the
 “ spiritual state of wickedness in heavenly places.”

The first order is principalities and powers : that is, fallen angels, the devil and his angels. The second is the worldly princes of the darknes of this age : These are temporal kings, during all that part of this age, or *Christian dispensation*, which may be stiled the darknes of it. Even those temporal princes, who live in any part of the period, from the end of the apostolic age to the commencement of the millenium, and who are not enlightened with the knowledge of the pure religion of Jesus; particularly the heathen Roman emperors, and the ten Roman Catholic kingdoms, which arose in the west during the dark ages of the church and of the world, after the dissolution of the Western empire by the barbarous nations. And the third is the spiritual state or kingdom of wickedness in heavenly places, that is, in the church. This is the Papal hierarchy. How exactly does this account of it correspond to that given of it by Paul, 2 Theff. ii. 3, 4. “ And that
 “ man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition: who
 “ opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is
 “ called God, or that is worshipped : so that he as
 “ God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”

All

All these three classes of enemies, with all the troops which they have led on, shall be completely conquered by Christ at the commencement of the millennium. Then the Devil shall be confined to hell for a thousand years, and during that period shall tempt the nations no more; then there shall not be a single persecuting civil kingdom in the world; and then Papal Rome and superstition shall be finally overthrown.

The many crowns are the trophies of the victories of the Christian church over these enemies. In this chapter, from verse 15th, to 21st, and in chap. xx. 1,—3. it is clearly predicted, that all these enemies shall be completely overthrown at this period.

“And he had a name written that no man knew but he himself.” A name written might have been translated a *scriptural name*. It is evidently meant, that this name is written in the sacred scripture. It is said to be written, without mentioning any part of his body or armour on which it is inscribed. So far does inspired scripture excel all other writings, that whenever scripture is used indefinitely as it is here, it signifies inspired scripture.

“That no man knew,” should have been translated “that none knew.” The word man is not in the original, and the substitution of it greatly contracts the meaning of that clause. The word

“none

“none” comprehends all the intelligent beings in the universe, but the one expressly excepted, even “he himself.” No man nor angel knows the full meaning of his scriptural name. What this name is, we are told in the end of verse 13th, “and his name is called ‘The Word of God.’” That this is a scriptural name of Christ, and one which accorded to his nature before his incarnation, is evident from John i. 1, 2, 3, and 14. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.—And the *Word* was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” It is one thing to know, to distinguish from all other names, and to pronounce the sound of a particular name; and it is another thing to know and fully understand its meaning and signification. This is the case with this name, “The Word of God;” and it is not so much so with any other name which men pronounce, except the name of God itself.

Names were originally given to persons and things, expressive of their real natures. Hence, in scripture the name of God is frequently used to signify God himself. Whether “The Word of God”

is used here to signify the nature of Christ, or merely that name which was given him in scripture before his incarnation, its full meaning is known to none but himself. This assertion is absolutely true, provided Christ is true God: but it cannot be true of even the first and highest of creatures. It cannot be said of the highest creature, that any one thing is known to none but himself, because all things are perfectly known to God. But, as Christ is God; if by the Word of God is meant the nature of Christ, it must be absolutely and perpetually true that his nature is known to none but himself. It is essential and peculiar to the divine nature to be incomprehensible, because it is infinite. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" Though the divine nature must ever be incomprehensible by all creatures, because their faculties are finite while the subject is infinite; yet it must be fully known to God, because however great his nature is, his own powers must be as great.

The difficulty increases in appearance, though not in reality, when we consider Christ in his personality, as the Word of God or Son of God.

I have used the term *person*, because perhaps human thought and human language cannot afford a better. But let us not imagine, that by *person* as applied to God the Father, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit, is signified the very same thing which

which is meant by person when applied to one man to distinguish him from another. It is something in the divine nature, in one respect more like the distinction of persons among men, than any other thing we are acquainted with; but, in another respect perfectly unlike this personality, as it implies identity and unity inseparable from this distinction.

But why darken counsel with words on this subject, it relates to the nature, nay, to the peculiarities of the nature of God; it is therefore fully known to none but God himself. Could we fully comprehend the nature of God, one of these two impossibilities must take place; either he must cease to be God, or we to be creatures.

I have often pitied the folly and criminality of those men, who define by terms of human invention the nature of God, and the modes in which he exists and acts, and who consider every deviation from these technical terms of human invention as impiety or atheism; and also of those men, who perceiving something like distinct personality attributed to Christ in scripture, have impiously and boldly denied that he is true God. Ah! vain man dost thou imagine, that thou canst fully comprehend the divine nature? Can the short span of thy little faculties measure the infinitude of Deity? Art thou unable to comprehend thine own nature, and to know how in thyself matter and

spirit are united and operate upon each other? Do the essences of the plainest things totally escape thy notice? Does a perfect knowledge of the smallest herb exceed thy boasted powers? and darest thou to deny *The Word of God* to be true God, because thou canst not comprehend the mode of his existence in the unity of the divine nature? Tempt not yourselves, by the same delusion by which Satan at first deceived the human race when he said, "For God doth know, that in the day
" you eat thereof your eyes shall be opened, and
" ye shall be as *gods*, knowing good and evil." Let us not think, that we can know what is above the ken of creatures. Let us never attempt to be wise above what is written.

If we attend to the import of *the Word of God*, as the name by which Christ was known before he had created this world, or took our nature upon him, we shall find that, although we may know much of its meaning, yet none but he himself, as God, knows it fully. The very nature and use of a *word* is to reveal the mind of the person who speaks : Hence *the Word of God* signifies that which reveals the mind and will of God. Christ is therefore styled *the Word of God*, because it is his peculiar character and office to make known to men the nature and the will of God, both before and after his incarnation. Matth. xi. 27.
" None knoweth the Son but the Father : neither
" knoweth

“ knoweth any the Father, save the Son, and
“ he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.”
After the words *none* and *any* I have left out the
word *man*, because it is not in the original, and
the addition of it greatly contracts the meaning
of that verse. Whatever way pure spirits per-
ceive and enjoy one another, in our present embo-
died state, in which our spirits perceive, feel, and
act, through the channel of our bodily senses, and
in which we cannot directly see an immaterial sub-
stance by our bodily eyes, the nature and will of
God are revealed to us in a manner suited to our
present organs of perception. By visible objects
and external revelation, the nature and will of
God are manifested to men. But Christ is the
chief agent in all these visible works: and, as it
seems to be as it were the peculiar department of
the second person to reveal the nature and will of
God by these, both before and after his incarna-
tion, it is probable that he is therefore called *the*
Word of God. Here, for want of precise terms,
we are obliged to use such as are too vague when
applied to this subject.

As all things were created by *the Word of God*,
he reveals, to all nations and ages, the nature and
will of God, so far as they are proclaimed by the
works of creation. As all judgement is committed
to the Son, and as he reigns in the moral govern-
ment of the world, as King of kings and Lord of
lords,

lords, he reveals the nature and the will of God, by the course of providence. In no age does he leave God without this witness. When he took the human nature upon him, by his whole conduct he exhibited the most just views of the nature and will of God, in a way the most adapted to the faculties of men. It was when "the Word was
" made flesh, and dwelt among men, full of grace
" and truth, that they beheld his glory, the glory
" as of the only-begotten of the Father."

By tracing intellectual and moral qualities in ourselves, and by separating in idea every imperfection from them, and adding infinitude to them, we form the ideas which we entertain of the intellectual and moral perfections of God. Thus formed, we are obliged to express them in very abstracted terms; but abstract terms are intelligible only to those persons, who are accustomed to think not of things themselves, but of ideas or the impressions of things on their own minds, which is not the case with the greatest proportion of mankind. Hence we are under the necessity of speaking to them, of the divine perfections, as it were in an unknown tongue, which cannot convey knowledge to their minds. But, in the life of Jesus, every intellectual and moral quality, in their divine perfection, were exhibited in a visible form, and clothed as it were with a body. There were no defects in either, as they appeared in him, to be taken away

way

way before they could be applied to God. He was the wisdom and power of God. He spake as never man spake. In him the Godhead dwelt bodily. He was full of truth. In perception, feeling, affection, and conduct, he never deviated from the truth. He was full of grace. He bestowed the most inestimable blessings on men, in the most gracious manner ;—blessings which none but God could bestow, and bestowed, as all divine blessings are, from pure unmerited grace and benevolence. The divine perfections, which adorned his character, were taught by his life, in a way equally suited to the philosopher and to the peasant, to the rich and to the poor. His perfect knowledge of future events, and of the secret thoughts of men's hearts, taught men the omniscience of God, in a way suited to every capacity. By a word rendering the stormy winds and raging waves a calm, raising the dead to life from their coffins and their graves, and making an armed band of regardless foldiers fall prostrate on the ground before him as dead men, he taught the omnipotence of God. Continually going about doing good ; crowding favours upon his bitterest enemies ; strictly just to all both in a private and public character ; rendering unto all their due, to God the things that are God's, and to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's ; suffering on the cross, to satisfy the demands of divine justice, to support
the

the honour of the divine government, and to save sinners of mankind, his very enemies ; he taught the justice and the mercy of God in a way the most sublime and perfect, and the most plain and striking. He thus exhibited every intellectual and moral perfection in one character, forming one all-comprehending perfection, which is the glory of God. He also reveals the nature and the will of God, by the truths which he taught by his personal ministration, and by those which he empowered and enabled his apostles to teach in his name, as they are both recorded in the sacred scriptures.

These are only a few hints of the meaning of his name, "The word of God." Should we follow it much farther, we should soon get beyond our depth : For this is the name which none knoweth fully but he himself. None knoweth all the ways, in which he revealeth the Father and the Father's will to men, by his works, his word, and his spirit. None knoweth to how many other orders of beings he reveals the divine nature and will, in other parts of God's wide creation. None knoweth why his peculiar office should be the Revealer of God, so that "none should know the Father, save he to whomsoever the Son reveals him."

"And he was clothed with a vesture dipt in blood." The blood with which his vesture is stained, is neither his own blood nor that of his followers :

followers: but it is the blood of his enemies. The whole context fixes this prediction to a state of triumph, particularly to the commencement of the millennium. To such a state, the shedding of his own blood or that of his followers does not accord; but the shedding the blood of his enemies exactly corresponds to it. It is true, that his own blood was shed on the cross for the remission of the sins of many, and that the blood of his followers was often shed by their persecutors, when they suffered as martyrs for the truth. But both these were states of humiliation and suffering, not of triumph to him and to his church.

The words now under our view are a reference to a prediction of Isaiah of this triumphant state, of greater length, in which he expressly says, that the vesture of Christ is stained with the blood of his enemies. Isaiah lxiii. 1,—6. “Who is this that
 “ cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from
 “ Bozra? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that
 “ speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine fat?
 “ I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread
 “ them in mine anger, and trample them in my
 “ fury, and *their blood* shall be sprinkled upon my
 “ *garments*, and I will stain all my raiment. For the

“ day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year
“ of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and
“ there was none to help; and I wondered that
“ there was none to uphold: therefore mine own
“ arm brought salvation unto me, and my fury it
“ upheld me. And I will tread down the people
“ in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fu-
“ ry, and I will bring down their strength to the
“ earth.” The plain meaning of this symbol is,
that the triumphant state of the church of Christ
shall not commence until Rome and her adherents
shall be totally overthrown in the destructive and
bloody wars already described.

Verses 14th, 15th, 16th.—And the armies
which were in heaven followed him upon
white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and
clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp
sword, that with it he should smite the na-
tions: and he shall rule them with a rod of
iron; and he treadeth the wine-press of the
fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And
he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a
name written, King of kings, and Lord of
lords.

In this triumph, the armies in heaven follow
their leader, like him mounted on white horses.

The

The saints or Christians in the church of Christ are called armies in this place, because they are connected with the militant and triumphant states of the church. The militant state they had just finished in the total overthrow of Antichrist, and the triumphant they are just entering upon in the commencement of the millennium. White horses, as was formerly shewn, signify prosperous dispensations of divine providence; in which the gospel appears in its scriptural purity. These armies are clothed in fine linen, white and clean. Fine linen, white and clean, is expressly declared to be the righteousness of the saints, in verse 8th of this chapter, which hath been illustrated in its place.

This symbolical description of these armies in heaven, (the church of Christ), is a clear prediction, that at the commencement of the millennium all real Christians shall share in the triumphs of the church, shall enjoy the gospel in its purity, and under a most prosperous dispensation of divine providence shall all be adorned with all those Christian graces and virtues which constitute the righteousness of the saints.

“The sharp sword that goeth out of his mouth” is one of those symbols, which is applied to Christ in this book, chap. i. 16. and chap. ii. 12. This sword which proceeds out of the mouth of Christ, is that which in Eph. vi. 17. is called “the sword of the Spirit,” even the word of

God or inspired scriptures. With it he shall, at that period, smite the nations, the heathens. It shall appear that, though true Christians have used no other offensive weapon against their enemies, this one hath proven sufficient; and that "it hath been mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." Then the domination of superstition over the minds of men shall be subdued by the influence of the word of God. With it too, he shall smite the nations; for it shall then appear, that all the kings, princes, and nations of the earth who had opposed Christianity have been overcome, punished, and destroyed, in the course of divine providence, in the ways and at the times predicted in the sacred scriptures.

Though in a peculiar manner Christ is the King of Zion, (his church), he is also the governor of the world at large. Over his people, he is the Prince of peace. Over his whole dominion, "a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of his kingdom." But it is the *nations* that he shall rule with a rod of iron. The Gentiles who oppose his kingdom, are those whom he rules with that just severity, which is expressed by ruling them with a rod of iron. When they shall be overcome, and when the kingdom of God and of his Christ which they opposed with all their art and power shall be triumphant, it shall then appear that he hath in
this

this manner ruled and subdued them. This symbol is taken from Psalm ii. 9. and is a reference to the whole of that psalm. That psalm contains a very striking prophecy of the opposition which the Heathen, the people, the kings, and the rulers of the earth should make against the Lord and his Christ, and of that destruction which they should thereby draw upon themselves, at that period when Christ should have the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; when he shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. The reader is desired to consider the whole of this psalm with attention, and in doing so to remember, that the *Lord's Anointed* is the *Lord's Christ*, and with the greatest propriety might have been thus translated.

Treading the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God signifies, that it shall then appear that, in the course of divine providence, he hath totally destroyed the enemies of his church by most bloody wars. This symbol is a reference to a full prediction of these bloody wars in Isaiah lxiii. 1,—6.

The name, King of kings and Lord of lords, hath been a name of Christ from the time that all judgement was delivered unto the Son. In the course of providence, he raises up one king, and puts down another. By a secret but powerful influence,

fluence, he commands the most powerful lords with more effect than any of them could command their vassals and subjects. He sits supreme governor of the world. The greatest kings and most powerful lords are only the ministers in his kingdom. Neither knowing nor intending it, and without unnatural restraint upon the liberty of their minds, they contrive and execute what he hath planned for the administration of the government of this world. As God said of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so may he say of all the kings and lords of the earth, Exod. ix. 16. "And in very deed for
" this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in
" thee my power: and that my name may be de-
" clared throughout all the earth." It is true at this moment, that Christ, as the supreme ruler of the world, is King of kings and Lord of Lords, as he is styled in chap. xvii. 14. But, at the commencement of the millennium this shall be not only true, but also conspicuously evident. This name shall then be written upon his vesture and on his thigh. It shall be as conspicuous as the name of any person should be if written in this manner. When it shall be evident from fact, that all the revolutions which have happened in the different kingdoms of the world have united to bring about that great and glorious revolution, which shall take place at the millennium, it shall then be manifest that the kings and lords in these
kingdoms

kingdoms were overruled by a supreme power; and that Christ was and is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Verses 17th.—21st.—And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out

out of his mouth : and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

These verses contain a farther description of that terrible destruction with which Papal Rome shall be finally overthrown. So many shall fall in the field of battle, that their unburied carcases shall become food to the birds of prey. This shall be the case with the dead bodies of men of all ranks, from the greatest kings down to the meanest slaves. Their number shall be so great, that if all the ravenous birds under the whole heaven were collected together they might gorge themselves with their carcases. The kings of the earth, the rulers of the darkness of this age ; and the Papal hierarchy, the spiritual wickedness in heavenly places ; two of the classes of Christ's enemies, shall be completely overthrown in this battle.

In verse 20th, both the beast and the false prophet are mentioned. The beast is the Papal hierarchy, or civil constitution of Rome. The false prophet is the Pope, considered individually and personally as the supreme governor in that kingdom. This false prophet is not Mahomet, as some have imagined. No part of the context has any reference to Mahomet, and none of the qualities ascribed to the false prophet in this verse correspond to the character of Mahomet ; but they all exactly agree

agree to that of the Pope of Rome, and the context relates to him. This false prophet wrought miracles before the beast, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. Mahomet wrought no miracles to promote the superstition and idolatry of Popery. On the contrary, he wrecked his keenest vengeance on the votaries of Rome for their idolatry. But the Pope was distinguished by working many false miracles, to deceive them that had the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. By these he greatly promoted the superstitions of Popery. And the whole context treats of the beast, and of the kings of the earth, to whom the Pope stands in the nearest relation. At that period the Papal hierarchy shall be dissolved for ever; the Roman empire shall never more rise up in any other form of government; and the Popes, as the last head of government, shall go into endless perdition with it. When he and his kingdom shall be completely overthrown, it shall then fully appear that he was a false prophet; since that kingdom is totally overthrown, which he had often declared should continue to the end of the world, and should triumph over all those Christians whom he contemptuously denominated heretics. The adherents of Rome shall then be slain in the way pre-

dicted in the sacred scriptures. And it shall appear that the time and manner of their final overthrow are a fulfillment of the scripture prophecies concerning the destruction of the kings of the earth and the rulers, who take counsel together against the Lord and his Christ.

CHAP.

C H A P. XX.

VISION XIII.

Verses 1st,—5th. **A**ND I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgement was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, nei-

ther had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands: and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

This chapter contains predictions of the millenium, of the state of the world after the millenium, of the general resurrection, of the final judgement, and of the different situations of men in a future state. These are grand and interesting subjects to mankind.

These five verses contain a compendious view of the millennium, which is exhibited at full length in the two following chapters. Previous to a particular explanation of them, it will be highly proper, on a subject so little understood by one part of mankind, and so grossly misunderstood by another part of them, that I should shew what is meant by the millennium, at what time it shall commence, and how long it shall continue.

For the information of those readers who understand not the Latin language, let it be observed, that the word millennium is compounded of two Latin words, which signify a thousand years. And that this term signifies that period of a thousand years,

in which Christians shall reign with Christ on earth, as predicted in verse 4th.

By the millennium, I do not understand such a state as accords to any of the many superstitious and enthusiastic descriptions of the renovation of this earth after the general conflagration, of the first resurrection of the bodies of the saints to live again for a thousand years upon that renovated earth, and of the personal reign of Christ for a thousand years on earth; which have been published to the world, even by men of considerable note. These conjectures I reject, because there is no foundation for them in scripture; and they are highly unreasonable and improbable in themselves, so far as we are capable of judging on such a subject. But, by the millennium I understand a triumphant state of the kingdom of God or true religion of Jesus on earth for a thousand years. This kingdom of God is righteousness, truth, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. This kingdom, consisting of these four constituent parts, shall be in a triumphant state during the whole millennium. Then mankind shall in a very high degree be freed from ignorance and error; and shall love, study, and know the truth, on every subject in which they have any concern, and especially on the subject of religion. Universal righteousness shall prevail. They shall pay that regard to the perfect and meritorious righteousness of Christ, which accords to truth,

truth, to the perfection of the divine law, to the infinitude of divine justice, to its own perfection, to their need of it, and to the gracious purpose of God in sending Christ into this world to fulfill all righteousness. They shall love and practise righteousness to God, to their brethren of mankind, to all the creatures of God with whom they have intercourse, and to themselves, in all its branches : and they shall make perpetual progress in truth and righteousness. Universal peace shall prevail on the earth. Men, as individuals, shall enjoy peace with God, and peace of conscience ; as connected in society, they shall live in peace with their neighbours, whether in smaller or larger societies. Private quarrels and public wars shall cease to the ends of the earth. "They shall beat their swords into plough shares, and their spears into pruning hooks ; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." The brute creation, treated with gentleness by men, shall become much more gentle and harmless to them and to one another than they are now. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a young child shall lead them."

Universal joy shall abound. That joy which is pure and exalted happiness, that joy which is congenial

genial to a mind renewed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost" For "the fruit of the Spirit is joy." That joy, which proceeds from the belief, love, and obedience of the truths revealed in scripture by the Holy Ghost; that joy, which shall accord with peculiar fitness to that triumphant state of Christianity, in which men will be so much under the influence of the Holy Spirit, that the law of God will be written on their hearts. Not only shall all public affairs be conducted with prosperity and joy, but individuals shall also be happy. They shall be blessed with that joy, which is inseparable from high attainments in truth, righteousness, and peace. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding."

Such, in a certain degree, shall be the situation of the whole world during these thousand years; and in a very high degree of every part of it, except that stiled Gog and Magog in verse 8th, which shall be explained in the commentary on that verse.

On this part of the subject it is unnecessary to enlarge in this place. The nature of the millenium will be illustrated more fully in its proper place, when we come to consider those predictions of this book, which at once foretell and describe this glorious state of the church of Christ and of the world.

In the mean time, it may not be improper to observe, that if God were to reveal a system of religion to men, it is not possible for man to conceive a system more fit for God to reveal or man to receive, than a system of truth, righteousness, peace, and joy,—That, if Christianity, which is this system, is a religion from God, of which full evidence is afforded, it is certain that it cannot come to nought, that men and devils cannot overthrow it, but that it must prevail over all opposition, and become triumphant in the most proper season. Is it not reasonable to hope, that truth, righteousness, and joy, shall prevail over ignorance, vice, and misery in some age of the world? Does not the progress of arts, knowledge, and commerce in the world for the two centuries since the Reformation, render it highly probable that two more, with that accelerated motion which is the consequence of progressive improvements, shall bring the world to that state of knowledge, righteousness, peace, and joy? Is it an improbable supposition, that in the progress of society men shall see the folly and the loss of private contentions and of public wars? Considering how much the rigour and violence of private feuds and of public wars have been mitigated for the two last centuries, is it not highly probable that the progress of civilization and of Christianity may nearly destroy them in two centuries more? Are there not in fact ma-

ny examples of wise and good men who enjoy a high degree of happiness in this world in outward situations not the most prosperous? Have there not been many, are there not many persons still in the world, whose serenity, cheerfulness, and joy speak the language of the prophet, “ Although “ the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit “ be in the vines, the labour of the olive shall “ fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock “ shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be “ no herd in the stall: yet I will rejoice in the “ Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.” Is it not therefore highly probable, that when wise and good men become numerous in the world, joy and happiness will abound in it; more especially when the peace and prosperity of their outward situation shall be so favourable to that joy which flows from an enlightened understanding and a purified heart.

Before fixing the commencement of the millennium, it will be best to fix the time of its continuance, as one argument for the time of its commencement will be drawn from that of its continuance.

In this chapter, which predicts the millennium, it is repeatedly said, in the most express and plain terms, that it shall continue for a thousand years. It is said verse 2d, “ that Satan should be “ bound a thousand years;” verse 3d, “ that he

“ should deceive the nations no more till the
“ thousand years should be fulfilled ;” verse 4th,
“ that the saints should live and reign with Christ
“ a thousand years ; verse 5th, “ that the rest of
“ the dead lived not again until the thousand
“ years were finished ;” verse 6th, “ that those who
“ have part in the first resurrection shall reign with
“ Christ a thousand years ;” and verse 7th, “ that
“ when the thousand years are expired Satan
“ shall be loosed out of his prison.”

As the prophecy expressly limits the continuance of the millenium to a thousand years, the only ground of doubt, and the only question which hath arisen or can arise on this part of the subject is, whether these thousand years are to be understood literally for a thousand civil years, or for a thousand prophetic years, which would make 360,000 civil years? From the idiom of symbolical language it is quite clear, that a thousand years in this passage signify a thousand civil years. *A year* is not used as a symbol or character in the symbolical language. If it is ever used at all, it is in a way similar to a metaphor in alphabetical language.—The reason of this is interwoven with the very construction of the symbolical language. In it the lesser is always the symbol for the larger of any thing of the same or of a similar kind, because, when the symbols were originally painted or engraven, if they had been large they would
have

have taken up too much room on the tables on which they were drawn. Hence, from the analogy of the written language, the lesser was used in the spoken language to signify the greater. Thus, a *day*, which is the complete revolution of the earth round its own axis, is the symbol for a *year*, which is the complete revolution of the earth round the ecliptic. The lesser revolution is the symbol for the greater revolution of the same kind. But, in that very early age of society in which the symbolical language was formed, the state of astronomical knowledge did not lead men to perceive any greater revolutions of the earth by which time is measured ; and for which a year, as the lesser revolution, might have been the proper symbolical character. Accordingly, in fact the word which expresses the civil year, (*ἔτη*), which is the word in the whole of this passage, does not appear to be used as a symbol by any of the prophets, either in the Old or New Testament. If they predicted a very long period of time for which a year might be a more convenient symbol than a day, they always take another word than a year to signify 360 prophetic days, or as many civil years. Thus Daniel, vii. 25. uses “ a time and times and the dividing of time,” and John, Revel. xii. 14. “ a time and times and half a time.” The only apparent exception from this fact that I have ever found in prophetic

writings, is ch. ix. 15. of this book. "And the four
 "angels were loosed, which were prepared for an
 "hour and a day, and a month and a *year*, for to
 "flay the third part of men." But this exception is
 only apparent, for the word in the original which
 is translated *year* in this passage is very different
 from the one translated year in chap. xx. In
 chap. ix. it is ἐνιαυτος, which properly signifies a
 revolution, that which returns again into itself,
 and ought to have been translated a *revolution* in
 that place. But, in all the six verses in chap. xx.
 where the word years occurs, it is ἐτη in the ori-
 ginal, which is the proper word for years in the
 Greek language.

It seems also to be agreeable to the idiom of
 the symbolical or prophetic language, that when-
 ever the same period of time is repeated in the
 same continued narration, a *different* symbol, but
 which signifies the same length of time, is used at
 each repetition: for this good reason, that by
 comparing one of them with another, and finding
 their exact agreement in sense, though different in
 sound, we may learn with certainty the period of
 time which they signify. Thus, chap. xi. 2, 3.
 42 months and 1260 days are used to signify the
 same period of time, even 1243 civil years, as was
 formerly shewn, and, in chap. xii. 6, 14, 1260
 days, and a time and times and half a time, are
 used to signify the same period of time. But in
 literal

literal or common language the very reverse is the case: in order to prevent ambiguity, whenever the same period of time is repeated in a continued narrative, the same terms are used to express it at each repetition. It is not expressed in days in one part of the narrative, in weeks, months, or years in other parts of it. But, in chap. xx. though the period of the millennium is six times repeated in verses 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, it is always expressed without variation by "*a thousand years.*" For these two reasons, together with another which cannot be stated with propriety and force until it hath been first produced in proof of the time of the commencement of the millennium, I am as fully convinced as language can make me, that the continuance of the millennium shall be for one thousand civil yeas.

But, let it be observed that the church of Christ shall not be oppressed nor overcome by her enemies when those thousand years shall expire. She shall continue triumphant to the end of the world; and for ever in a future state. For, in ch. xxii 5. which respects the millennium state, as shall be shewn in its place, it is said, "the servants of God shall reign for ever and ever." But, by the millennium is meant, that for these thousand years no attempt whatever shall be made to disturb the peace and interrupt the prosperity of the church of Christ and of the world, that there shall be no
persecutions

persecutions nor wars on the whole earth : but, at the end of these thousand years, certain persons filed Gog and Magog, instigated by the Devil, shall attack the church of Christ, and by bloody wars shall disturb the peace of the whole world for a short time ; but, that they shall be disappointed in their wicked attempts, and totally destroyed. And, that by their destruction the church of Christ and the world shall be left in a state of complete and final triumph and peace. These particulars will be illustrated in the commentary on verses 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th.

It now only remains, that I should shew at what time the millennium shall begin. That it shall begin with the year of Christ 2000, will I hope clearly appear to every candid and intelligent reader, from the following evidence. From chap. xix. 11. to chap. xx. 4. there is a close and continued narrative of the last and bloody wars in which the enemies of Christ's church shall be overthrown, and at the termination of which the triumphant state of his church shall commence. In that narrative, chap. xix. 12. Christ is represented with many crowns on his head ; chap. xix. 19, 20. the kings of the earth, the beast, and the false prophet are represented as killed ; chap. xx. 1, 2. Satan, the third class of Christ's enemies, is represented as chained in hell for a thousand years ; chap. xix. 14. the armies in heaven, or
saints,

faints, are represented as following Christ; and chap. xx. 4. these saints are represented as placed upon thrones, and reigning with Christ a thousand years.

This connection to some persons may appear to be broken by the intervention of the division of the xx. chapter. But let such persons be informed, that they ought to judge of the connection of the narrative by the sense, and in doing so, they ought not so much as to suppose the intervention of a division by the chapter. There were no divisions by chapters and verses in the original manuscripts of the sacred scriptures; but these were introduced in latter times, in order to assist men in making and finding citations from scripture with more expedition and certainty. The chapters are not always made at the most proper places, which is the case with this xx. chapter.

As therefore this is a very close connected narrative, the events contained in it must happen in the order in which they are narrated; and consequently, the millennium must commence immediately upon the final overthrow of Papal Rome. But, it was formerly shewn in its proper place, that Papal Rome shall be completely overthrown in the end of the year of Christ 1999. The millennium, therefore, which both in the order of this prophecy and in the nature of the thing, follows close upon the overthrow of Papal Rome, must

commence in the beginning of the year of Christ 2000.

On account of the prevalence of true religion and the total rest from wars in it, the millennium is as it were the great sabbath of the whole earth. The seventh part of time was set apart by the Almighty for a sabbath to men: But, the year of Christ 2000 is the first year of the seventh millenary of the world. At that time, 6000 years from the creation of the world will be run. Through the whole scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, there is a striking typical representation of some great and important sabbath, as a great septenary that has not yet taken place, and which evidently appears to be the millennarian septenary, as the great sabbath of the whole earth. Thus, Gen. ii. 3. "God blessed the seventh day, and "sanctified it." Exod. xx. 8,—11. The appointment of the seventh day as the weekly sabbath was renewed in a most solemn manner. Levit. xxv. 1,—7. every seventh year was appointed a sabbatical year; and Levit. xxv. 8, 9. the commencement of the year of jubilee, which was every fiftieth year, was to be fixed by the running of a septenary of sabbatical years: "And thou shalt "number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven "years, and the space of the seven sabbaths of "years shall be unto thee, forty and nine years." The number seven, because used in scripture to complete

complete all the sacred divisions of time, was regarded by the Jews as the symbol of perfection, and is used in this sense in scripture. Thus, the seven spirits mentioned in this book signify the perfect spirit of God. And all the parts of this book are divided into sevens; the seven churches, the seven stars, the seven golden candlesticks, the seven angels, the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven vials, and the seven thunders. Is it ever to be supposed that all these events which are interwoven with the Mosaic dispensation, which was symbolical or typical itself, and which are introduced into the New Testament, and abound so much in this book of Revelation, have no anti-type to correspond to them, no great sabbatical septennary to which they all point, and in which they shall all be accomplished? Is it not highly probable that they are all typical of the seventh millenary of the earth, which is the great sabbath?

There are also two particular passages of the New Testament which seem to point to the millennium as the great sabbath or millennarian septenary of the earth. The first is Heb. iv. 9. "There remaineth therefore a *rest* to the people of God." The word translated *rest* is *σαββατισμος*, which signifies a *sabbatism*, or such a rest as the sabbath is. From the context, it is evident that this sabbatism which remains for the people of

God, is on this earth, and of a spiritual or religious kind. It is also remarkable, that when in the context the apostle speaks of the rest unto which Joshua introduced the Israelites in the land of Canaan after their toils and travels in the wilderness, he always uses the word *καταπαυσις*. But, when he speaks of the rest which remaineth for the people of God, of which that of the Israelites in Canaan after their trials in the wilderness was typical, he changes the expression, and takes the word *σαββατισμος*, which is a word more peculiarly suited to a religious rest.

The other passage is 2 Pet. iii. 8. "But beloved, be not ignorant of this *one thing*, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." From the whole of that chapter, to which the reader is desired to pay particular attention, it is evident that the apostle informs Christians, that in the last days persons should arise who should scoff at the scriptural predictions of the millennium, of the dissolution of this world, and of the final judgement, saying, Where is the promise of Christ's coming in either of these ways? For, since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning? With respect to both these ways in which Christ shall come, the apostle furnishes Christians with a full answer to that objection of these scoffers, and with a solid foundation for their hope of the accomplishment

complishment of these promises, in the time fixed by the councils of heaven. These he states in verses 8th, 9th, when he says, "But beloved be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day: The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, (as some men count slackness); but is long-suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." The expressions used by the apostle evidently shew, that the context refers both to the millennium and to the general judgement. Verses 7th, 10th, 11th, and 12th, evidently refer to the conflagration and dissolution of this earth, and to the general judgement; and verse 13th evidently refers to the millennium: "Nevertheless," says he, or though all these things shall happen, yet before they happen "we according to his promise look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." In this verse he tells us, that his hope of the new heavens and the new earth is founded upon the promise of God. That promise is made and recorded in Is. lxxv. 17. "For behold I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come unto mind." The same account is given of the millennium, Rev. xxi. 1. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." Both

these passages are descriptions of the millennium state, and make parts of two very long and full predictions of it, as shall be shewn in its proper place in the commentary on chap. xxi. 1. Therefore as his hope was founded upon that promise, and as that promise relates to the millennium state solely, as the whole lxxv. chapter of Isaiah does, the apostle must certainly mean the millennium state in the 13th verse ; for it is not hope but presumption, whenever the expectation extends beyond the promise. Hence, connected with the promise of the millennium, he says, Beloved there is one particular thing of which you ought not to be ignorant, which is this, " that one day is with the Lord " as a thousand years." Recollect that God created the world in six days, and sanctified the seventh day for a sabbath. Every one of these days is the symbol of a thousand years. Let men therefore wait with patience, until six thousand years, typified by the six days in which God made this world, shall be fully run ; and then the seventh millenary, typified by the seventh or sabbath day, shall commence. This is " Christ's rest, which " shall be glorious," Isaiah ii. 10. " the sabbatism which yet remaineth for the people of " God," Heb. iv. 9. and that millennium represented by Isaiah and John, by " the new heaven " and the new earth." Count in this way, and you have no reason to complain that the Lord is slack

slack concerning his promise, that promise on which we hope for the new heaven and the new earth. Let the scoffers count in this way, and they shall see that they have no reason to complain that all things continue as they were; because by this rule of counting, the time is yet very distant when "all things shall be made new," according to the promise of God. This is not a general expression for the comprehensive view which God takes of all time past, present, and future. However true it is in that sense that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, yet in that sense it could not have served the purpose for which the apostle used it, nor have accorded to the very particular manner in which he expressed it. The two purposes for which he used it were, first, to support the faith and patience of Christians, and next, to answer the objections of scoffers relative to the commencement of the millennium.

However true it is that all time is ever present to God, and to the Eternal the difference between the length of a day and of a thousand years is very inconsiderable, yet it is not by what time is or appears to God, but what it is or appears to themselves, that the conduct both of Christians and of scoffers will be regulated. If the time for accomplishing the promise were left indefinite, such a view of time in relation to God would tend rather

to increase the objections of scoffers and the doubts of Christians, because they could know but that one year might be with the Lord as ten thousand years as well as one thousand years; and thus, that the millennium might be at so vast a distance that it would become invisible to the human eye, and thought might lose itself in the countless revolutions of time. It is only when a person does not perform his promise at the promised time, that those to whom the promise was made have reason to complain that he is slack concerning his promise. When, therefore, the apostle uses these words to shew men that God is not slack concerning his promise of the millennium, it is evident, that by them he shews that the definite and determinate time in which God had promised that this kingdom of Christ's should come, is not yet arrived. Six thousand years, correspondent to the six days in which God created the world, have not yet run out; the time, therefore, typified by the seventh or sabbath; which is the promised time of the millennium, is not yet come. If that time had been past and the promise not fulfilled, Christians might have had some reason to doubt, and scoffers to mock: but as that is not the case, the doubts of the one and the scoffs of the other are both unreasonable.

The manner of the apostle's expression also fixes to it the sense in which I have explained it. He says,

says, Be not ignorant of this *one thing*, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. By this expression, *this one thing*, he plainly shews, that it is not used as a general expression; for in that way it is as true, and might as well be said, that one day is with the Lord as a million of years. To shew that he used the expression in a very particular sense, the apostle repeats it, “that a thousand years are as one day.” It is highly probable, that it is in reference to some such divisions of time as the ages of the world into seven millennaries, and the seventh of these a sabbatism, that six days were spent in the creation of the world, and that the seventh was sanctified for a sabbath. The almighty Creator could have made the world in a moment, as easily as in six days; and for any thing which we know, another day or another proportion of time might have been as fit for a sabbath as the seventh.

By all these arguments united, I am convinced that the millennium will commence with the first year of the seventh millenary of the world, which, according to the best chronologies, will correspond to the two thousandth year of Christ.

It is thus also upon principles of chronology, interwoven with the predictions of scripture, that the true year of the birth of Christ may be ascertained. Every reader will give that assent to the conclusion,

conclusion, which corresponds to the impression which these arguments make upon his mind.

This argument which fixes the commencement to the beginning of the seventh millenary of the world, as the great sabbath of the whole earth, on the same principle fixes its endurance to one thousand years. For "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

In the first three verses of this chapter, it is predicted, in very plain symbolical language, that the Devil shall be confined to hell, and restrained from deceiving mankind for the space of a thousand years. His restraint shall begin and end with the millennium.

It is said "he shall deceive the *nations* no more" during that time. Ever since the day in which the Devil tempted and deceived Adam and Eve, he hath been employed in tempting mankind. But, it was only the nations as distinguished from the people of God, that he deceived to their own destruction. The faints he tempted, but could not thus deceive these elect ones. But, for these thousand years he shall be restrained from deceiving even the nations. Then the Devil, as the last enemy of Christians shall be vanquished. When these thousand years are expired, he shall be loosed from this restraint for a little season, about the beginning

ning of the year of Christ three thousand and one.

Until that time, all the periods of time are fixed in this book with the most exact precision: but after the end of the millennium, they are mentioned in general and indefinite terms. It is said, "He shall be loosed for a little season," or short time. Relative time is denominated long or short, according to the length of the period of time with which it is compared. But, not being told with what period of time this little season is compared, it is to us very indefinite. As the precision in fixing all former times in this book was a proof of its inspiration, so when the events approach near the end of the world, the leaving of times indefinite, as in this verse, is also a proof of its inspiration; because, whatever certainty it gives us of the times of other events, it leaves us in that uncertainty of the precise time of the end of the world, which accords to the declaration of Christ himself on that subject, Matth. xxiv. 46. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

It is evident from the context, that the *armies* in heaven, mentioned in chap. xix. 14. are the *they* whom John saw sitting on thrones in verse 4th of this chapter. At the commencement of the millennium, the armies in heaven, that is, the saints, shall be raised to a triumphant and dignified state,

represented by the symbol of being seated on thrones. Of this triumphant state of the church Christ speaks to his disciples, in terms very similar to those used in this verse, Matth. xix. 27. "Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Not only shall the saints be raised to a triumphant state, but judgement shall also be given unto them. The promise which was made to the martyrs who suffered under Heathen Rome, chap. vi. 9, 10, 11. shall be fully accomplished. They prayed that God would judge and avenge their blood on them who dwell on the earth. And it was promised unto them that white robes should be given unto them, but that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren that should be killed as they were should be fulfilled. Their fellow servants are killed under Papal Rome, and they shall not be fulfilled until the last martyrs shall be slain by Rome. At the commencement of the millennium, it shall then appear that vengeance had been brought both upon Heathen and Papal Rome for the blood of the martyrs, and by the overthrow of all their enemies and the prosperity of the church, that the decided judgement of God had been given

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en in favours of that cause to which they had borne faithful testimony.

In what respect judgement should be given unto them, and they should be placed on thrones, the following words in ver. 4th farther predict and illustrate. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Some have understood these words, as a prediction that the martyrs who were slain under Heathen and Papal Rome shall be raised to life from their graves at the commencement of the millennium, and shall personally reign with Christ on earth for a thousand years. Even if the language of this passage had been much stronger in favours of a real resurrection of the martyrs at that time than it is, there are so many unanswerable objections against such a resurrection at that time, that it would not be easy to make candid and intelligent men to understand the words in that sense, if they could possibly bear any other. Does not scripture assure us, that the souls of departed saints are with Christ in heaven, which is a situation far better than any state on this earth? Could it be any triumph or exaltation to them, to be brought down from such exalted society and bliss in heaven, to

dwell for a thousand years on earth, even in the millennium state?

But the words, as a symbolical representation, do not contain the slightest hint of a real resurrection. John speaks expressly of the *souls* of the martyrs, but not one word of their *bodies*. But, a real resurrection can respect the bodies only; for the souls are neither dead nor buried, nor subject to either death or burial. They are said to live and reign with Christ a thousand years. Though it is highly probable, both from the language of scripture and from the nature of the thing, that the ordinary length of the life of man shall be much longer in the millennium period than it is at present, yet we have no reason to believe that individuals shall live for a thousand years in that period. These, therefore, who are to live so long, must not be regarded as individual persons, but as a society or succession of men who are well typified by the martyrs of Jesus.

The language in this place is very similar to that which is used with respect to the two witnesses in ch. xi. In ch. xi. 3. it is said, "And I will give power
 " unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a
 " thousand two hundred and threescore days,
 " clothed in sackcloth." It was formerly shewn in its place, that these two witnesses were not two individual witnesses; but that they were a succession of martyrs, and that not any individual two
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of them were to live or prophesy for 1243 years, but that the whole succession of them should prophesy for that time. From verse 7th to 13th, these witnesses are represented as killed, lying dead three days and an half, and afterwards rising to life again. Verse 11th, “And after three days and an half, the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they *stood* upon their *feet*, and great fear fell upon them that saw them.” This account of the resurrection of the two witnesses is much more like a personal and real resurrection than the one now under our view: because it is expressly said, that their *bodies* were dead, that the spirit of *life* entered into them, and that they *stood* on their *feet*. Yet, as hath been shewn in that place, and hath been proven long ago by the event, that resurrection of the two witnesses to life was the revival of their testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, which happened at the glorious Reformation, exactly three years and an half after the witnesses for the truth had been silenced. Is it not therefore reasonable to understand the description in chap. xx. in a similar sense? Is it not contrary to all the rules of just criticism, to understand two similar descriptions in the same book, in opposite, or even not in similar senses?

The true meaning therefore of this symbolical representation is this. At that period, the world shall be peopled with men of the same spirit
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character with the real martyrs of Christ; with men, who like them shall call no man on earth master in matters of religion; who, free from the fetters of superstition and idolatry, and regarding the sacred rights of conscience, shall regulate their faith, worship, and conduct, by the infallible standard of the word of God. Men of this character shall in succession live on earth, and enjoy a state of great purity and joy, for a thousand years. The martyrs may be said also to live and reign with Christ during that period, on account of the very high but unsuperstitious respect which the inhabitants of that age shall pay to their memories, and the warm gratitude which they shall feel for those good and undaunted men, who adhering to the testimony of Jesus and the word of God, at the expence of their fame, fortunes, liberty, and lives, were the intelligent and voluntary instruments in the hand of God of transmitting to them, through the long and bloody space of 1243 years, that divine religion which they enjoy in such purity, peace, and plenty. They will pay very high respect to the memory of all those men, who in the preceding period adhered to the gospel of Jesus in its scriptural purity and simplicity, whether they were called to suffer for their faith or not; as the called, faithful, and chosen soldiers of Jesus, who clothed in the Christian armour had combated and overcome principalities, powers, the rulers of
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the darkness of this age, and spiritual wickednesses in heavenly places. For, thus vanquished, none of these enemies shall attack or annoy the men of the millennium age.

Besides the martyrs who died either violent or natural deaths in the preceding period, many others of a very different description died, and many of them as violent deaths as any of the martyrs. All these wicked men, especially those who opposed Christianity and persecuted Christians, are called "the rest of the dead," in verse 5th. These lived not again until the thousand years were ended. No men resembling them shall live upon the earth to corrupt or disturb the purity and peace of the church, or of the world, until these thousand years shall be expired. Then, a race of men resembling them in attacking the church of Christ, and in disturbing the peace of the world by bloody wars, shall arise in the armies of Gog and Magog, which shall be shewn in the commentary on verses 8th, 9th.

For these thousand years the memory of these wicked men shall be buried in the deepest oblivion. These butchers of mankind, who in preceding ages were famed as heroes, for robbing individuals and nations of their most valuable property, and for deluging the world in human blood; these heads of churches and sects who were famed as oracles for leading men aside from the oracles of
God,

God, shall all appear so contemptible in the eyes of the enlightened and purified inhabitants of the millennium age, that they cannot extol their memories. Totally free of malice and revenge, these good men will not reproach the memory of even these pests of the preceding period of society. Unable to praise, and unwilling to reproach them, their memories shall be buried in the deepest oblivion. Let not therefore the desire of fame prompt the statesman or the churchman, in this age, to do any thing sinful in itself to accomplish his purposes. If he is a bad man, however high his rank, great his power, or enlarged his abilities, the time will come, even in this world, when the fame of the meanest servants of God shall far outshine his. When his name shall be entirely forgotten among men, "the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance."

Of this millennium state John says, "This is the first resurrection." By this symbol he declares, that this period shall be so striking a resemblance of the state of good men at the general resurrection, that it may be called "the first resurrection." At the general resurrection, the bodies of good men shall be raised glorious, immortal, and spiritual; their souls shall be confirmed in wisdom and goodness; the mutual influence of their souls and bodies shall preserve and increase the vigour of both; their outward situation and their society shall

shall be very good; and from the union of all these, their happiness shall be pure and exalted. In the millennium state, something resembling all this shall take place. Men shall be spiritually alive, their intellectual and moral powers shall act as they ought to do. So close is the connection between the body and the soul of man, and so powerful and permanent is their mutual influence, that the right disposition of the minds of men hath the most natural tendency to prevent many bodily infirmities and diseases, and to communicate to the body an uncommon degree of health, of vigour, and of beauty; more especially, if the proper regulation of the mind takes place in the early stages of life, while the constitution and the features of the body are in the course of forming, and if it continues uniform and permanent. Many mental vices give the most violent strokes to the constitution, and to the beauty of the body; and many virtues are the most sovereign medicines. “Envy is the rottenness of the bones. A merry heart doeth good like a medicine.” In the millennium state, when the minds of men shall be under such good, early, and permanent regulation, it is highly probable that their bodies shall be healthful, vigorous, beautiful, and long-lived, to a degree of which at present we can form no adequate idea. This is plainly intimated in chap. xxi. 4. Isaiah xxxiii. 24, and Isaiah lxxv.

17,—25. which passages are all predictions of the millennium state. A body and mind so well tempered and regulated must be mutually helpful to each other.

In the millennium, the outward situation of men must be very comfortable, for there shall be nothing to hurt in all God's holy mountain, and every man shall sit under his own vine and under his own fig-tree unmolested. Their society will be very good. They shall have the most pure and immediate communion with God and Christ, "for they are "the temple of the new Jerusalem;" they shall associate with good men only, for no wicked man shall arise until the thousand years shall be expired, and righteousness only dwelleth in the new heaven and the new earth.

How pure, exalted, and permanent, must be the happiness of men of that character, placed in this situation, and blessed with such society? Is not their state with propriety represented by the symbol of the first resurrection? Can any thing give men a more just and lively representation of the character, situation, society, and happiness of good men after the general resurrection, than the millennium shall do?

This state of the church of Christ, when the Jews with the fullness of the Gentiles shall be brought into it, the apostle Paul describes in terms of the same import with a *resurrection*, Rom. xi. 15.

"For

“ For if the casting away of them (the Jews) be
 “ the reconciling of the world : what shall the re-
 “ ceiving of them be but *life from the dead*.” The
 reader is desired to consider with attention the
 whole xxxvii. chapter of Ezekiel, which predicts
 and describes this state of the church and of the
 world at great length ; especially from verse 1st
 to 14th, where it is represented at great length by
 the symbol of a *resurrection*.

Verse 6th.—Blessed and holy is he that
 hath part in the first resurrection ; on such
 the second death hath no power, but they
 shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and
 shall reign with him a thousand years.

In this verse, the apostle gives a most compre-
 hensive description of the character and happiness
 of true Christians ; especially of those who shall
 live in the millennium. They are holy. Renew-
 ed by the Spirit of God, they do not confine their
 regard to some only of the Christian virtues, whilst
 they neglect or counteract others of them, but
 they cultivate and practise every virtue in its pro-
 per place ; and perpetually aspire at higher attain-
 ments in them. They are blessed. In them, as
 in all the intelligent, moral, and religious creatures
 of God, holiness and happiness keep pace with

each other. Their holiness qualifies them for enjoying happiness, and is itself one of the most essential ingredients in their bliss.

On such the second death hath no power. In this chapter, verse 14th, and in chap. xxi. 8. we are informed, that to be cast into the lake of fire is the second death. That is, the complete depravity and misery of wicked men in hell is the second death. The confirmed depravity of human nature, and that exquisite misery which is the consequence of it in a future state, are uniformly called death in scripture. Thus, Rom. vi. 23. "For the wages of sin is death;" Rom. viii. 6. "To be carnally minded is death;" and James i. 5. "Sin when finished bringeth forth death." Such persons, in common with all men, shall die the first death. Their bodies, separated from their souls, shall for some time moulder in the dust. But, they shall not be hurt of the second death: Their souls and bodies shall be eternally free from all that depravity and misery which form the vicious character and the woeful doom of wicked men in hell. So far from being confirmed in depravity and misery in a future state, they shall be holy and happy even in this world; and by such a character and blessedness, they shall acquire the habits of holiness and happiness, which shall accompany them into the other world. For even here, "they shall be priests of God, and of Christ," and

“and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

This is a description of the purity of their worship, and of the height of their triumph and prosperity during the millennium state, which was repeatedly given in the same words in reference to that state, in chap. i. 6. and chap. v. 10.

These words contain a plain and strong declaration of the divinity of Christ. The particle *καὶ*, which is translated *and*, signifies also *even*; and the context shews, that it ought to have been rendered *even* in this place. Thus, “they shall be priests of God, *even* of Christ, and shall reign with *him* a thousand years.” That it ought to have been rendered thus, is evident from the following clause, “and shall reign with *him*.” If God and Christ were not one, it would have been said, “and shall reign with *them*,” (not with him). If the particle is rendered *even*, as the following clause shews it ought to be, then this is a plain declaration that God and Christ are one. Indeed the same conclusion will follow, whatever way the particle *καὶ* is rendered. If they are priests of Christ, as well as of God, Christ must be true God, because religious worship is due to God only. If, after mentioning God and Christ, it is said “they shall reign with *him*,” it is evident that God and Christ are considered as one. The approach of every Christian to God in religious worship, in that state, shall be so near, so pure, and so constant,
that

that they are compared to the priests who approached nearer to God in the temple than the people could do, who were strictly holy, and who waited constantly on the ministrations of the temple. And their prosperity and triumph is beautifully expressed, by reigning with Christ.

Verses 7th;—10th.—And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

At the end of the thousand years, the divine restraint being taken off the devil, he shall be let loose from the prison of hell, for a little season, and permitted to tempt men as he formerly did. No
sooner

sooner shall he have it in his power to tempt men, that he shall hasten to this earth to deceive certain nations upon it, who during the millennium had lived in some remote corners of the world, probably ignorant of the knowledge, purity, and joy of all the other inhabitants of the world: but peaceable, because there was no devil on earth to tempt them to war, plunder, and bloodshed.

These nations, who shall be deceived by the devil to attack the church of Christ, and to rekindle the flame of war on earth after it had been extinguished for a thousand years, are called Gog and Magog. But, what nations are we to understand by the names of Gog and Magog? The whole xxxviii. and xxxix. chapters of Ezekiel contain at great length this prophecy concerning Gog and Magog. From them we may learn with a high degree of probability what nations these are. The passage is too long to be inserted here. The reader is therefore desired, before he shall proceed farther than this part, to read with attention chapters xxxvi. xxxvii. xxxviii. and xxxix. of Ezekiel.

From these chapters it is evident, that the wars which shall be raised against the church of Christ by Gog and Magog, shall be at a great distance from the time of Ezekiel, and in the period of the gospel dispensation. In chap. xxxviii. 8. they they shall be after many days, and in the *latter*
years,

years. This last expression is one of those which the Old Testament prophets always used to signify the time of the gospel dispensation. It is also evident that they shall be after the millennium state, since that state is predicted in chapters xxxvi. and xxxvii. and Gog and Magog are represented in chapters xxxvii. and xxxix. as attacking the church of God after it had been brought to the millennium state; and therefore, that in point of time they coincide with the prophecy concerning Gog and Magog in this place.

In chap. xxxviii. 2. Gog and Magog are thus described: "Son of man set thy face against Gog, " the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech " and Tubal, and prophesy against him." After the deluge, the whole world was peopled by the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The isles of the Gentiles were peopled by the descendants of Japheth. Magog was the second, Tubal the fifth, Meshech the sixth son of Japheth, and Togarmah was his grandson by Gomer his eldest son. The whole tenth chapter of Genesis contains a very particular account of the peopling of the earth at the time of the building of the tower of Babel. But it is only the first five verses of that chapter which relate to the subject now under our view. "Now these are the generations of the " sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth; and " unto them were sons born after the flood. The " sons

“ fons of Japheth ; Gomer, and *Magog*, and Ma-
 “ dai, and Javan, and *Tubal*, and *Meshech*, and
 “ Teras. And the fons of Gomer, *Askenah*, and
 “ *Riphat*, and *Togarmah*. And the fons of Ja-
 “ van, *Elishah*, and *Tarshish*, *Hittim*, and *Doda-*
 “ *nim*. By these were the isles of the Gentiles di-
 “ vided in their lands ; every one after his tongue,
 “ after their families, in their nations.” Ezekiel
 prophesied about fourteen hundred years after
 the dispersion of the descendants of Japheth to the
 isles of the Gentiles, at the building of Babel ; and
 John wrote this book about six hundred and se-
 venty years after the time of Ezekiel ; therefore
 neither of them could mean *Magog*, *Tubal*, or
Meshech personally, who were all dead long
 before they prophesied, but by *Magog*, *Tubal*, and
Meshech they both meant the descendants of
 these fons of Japheth. It is very common in the
 scriptures of the Old Testament, and it seems to
 be the idiom of the symbolical language, to call a
 nation even to the latest generations, by the
 name of their founder. Thus, for instance, the
 nation of the Jews are frequently called *Israel*, af-
 ter the name of *Israel*, which was given to Jacob
 the father of their tribes ; and the *Edomites*, are
 called *Edom*, after the name which was given to
Esau, their founder. *Gog* and *Magog*, therefore
 as explained by Ezekiel signify the descendants
 of Japheth. But not all his descendants, only the

nations who sprang from Magog his second, Tubal his fifth, Meshech his sixth son, and Togarmah his grandson, by his oldest son Gomer.

What particular nations these shall be, at the end of the year of Christ 3000, is not fully agreed by learned men, who have turned their attention to this subject. But the best founded opinion is, that the Sythians are descended from Magog. It is also said, that the Mogul Tartars, a people of the Scythian race, are still called *Magog* by the Arabian writers, who beyond the writers of every other country have preserved ancient names and customs. That they shall be a northern nation Ezekiel plainly declares in chap. xxxviii. 15. "And thou shalt come from thy place out of the *north* parts, thou and many people with thee."—— This he predicts of Gog in the *latter days*, verses 14, 15, 16. Hence, it is highly probable that Gog and Magog signify the Mogul Tartars, and certain that they signify those nations, be who they will, who shall in fact be the lineal descendants of Magog, Tubal, Meshech, and Togarmah, at the end of the millennium.

Both Ezekiel and John, predict that some other nations, besides these northern ones, shall be stirred up by the devil to the same war. In verse 8. John says, "and he shall go out to deceive the nations, who are in the four quarters of the earth; *γῶραις*; the word in the original, which is transla-

ted

ted quarters, signifies *corners*, that is remote and obscure parts of the earth, and is with propriety opposed to *πλατος της γης*. These nations Ezekiel calls, chap. xxxviii, 5. "Persia, Ethiopia, and Lybia." In great numbers as the sand of the sea, these nations shall attack the Christians, especially those of them who shall then be living in the land of Canaan and city of Jerusalem. But they shall be suddenly and totally destroyed, most probably partly by fire from the heavens, as a mark of the divine displeasure for their great wickedness in re-kindling in the world these wars and contentions, which proceed from the lusts of men set on fire from hell. At least such shall be the manner of their complete overthrow, as to convince the whole world that they are destroyed by God himself, whether mediately or immediately, and for ever to banish war and bloodshed from the face of the earth.

This also is the last effort, which the devil shall make to deceive and disturb the world. When they are conquered, he shall be remanded to hell, from whence he shall never return. He and his servants, especially those who have been most active under him in deceiving the world, and opposing the truth as it is in Jesus, shall be tormented day and night forever.

From Ezekiel chap. xxxix, it is evident that this world shall not end immediately on the overthrow

of Gog and Magog, and the second and final imprisonment of Satan in hell. For in verse 14, we are informed in what manner Christians shall be employed for seven months, and in verse 9, how they shall be employed for seven years, after the total defeat of Gog and Magog. For the remaining years of the world, truth, righteousness, peace, and joy, shall prevail without much interruption from wicked men or devils. When these years shall end, it is not for us to say, because it is not revealed. "That day knoweth no man, not even the angels in heaven, but God only. The secret things belong to the Lord our God: but those things, which are revealed belong to us." Let us never discover our folly by attempting to be wise above what is written.

Verses 11th,—15th. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death

death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them : and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire : this is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire.

This hieroglyphic predicts and describes the general and final judgement of the world, and the consequences of it. By the great white throne, and him that sat upon it, is represented the majesty, purity, and final nature of this judgement. A throne is the symbol of supreme dominion, rather than of judgement. But from the context, particularly verse 12, it is perfectly clear that this throne is the symbol for judgement. This symbol is used with peculiar propriety to signify the final judgement. A judgement from the throne in any government is at once supreme and final. There is no higher tribunal to which an appeal can be carried, and no person who can grant a pardon. The Judge of all the earth is the supreme Sovereign of the universe ; there is no higher tribunal than his to which the condemned sinner can appeal. Neither is there any king to pardon the condemned criminal, because God the Judge is King, and it is God only who can forgive sin. All
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the sentences which shall be passed at that awful day shall be final.

This throne is great. Great on account of the Judge, the great God of heaven and of earth ;—of his attendants, myriads of glorious angels ;—of the number and characters of those who shall be judged ; all the men who have lived in every age and country of the world, however diversified in their situations, stations, advantages, and characters, and on account of the sentences which shall be passed of final, unspeakable, and eternal bliss or misery.

This great throne is white. White is the symbol for purity, as hath been uniformly shewn in this book. The whole of this judgement shall be conducted with the most perfect purity and justice. When God is the judge, we may be perfectly certain that this shall be the case. All the divine perfections unite in assuring us, that he whose natural, intellectual, and moral perfections are all infinitely, immutably, and essentially perfect cannot pass a wrong sentence either through error, intention, or compulsion. The Judge of all the earth must ever do that which is right. Even those persons who shall be condemned will be obliged to acknowledge the justice of the sentence and the purity of the Judge. The justice of the divine procedure at that awful day is very particularly described in Rom. ii. 2. 16. That passage the
reader

reader is desired to consult with attention. In it one particular is mentioned, which remarkably displays the purity of this judgement, even that God will judge the secrets of men by or in the person of Jesus Christ. This is more fully declared in Acts xvii. 31. "Because he hath appointed
" a day in the which he will judge the world
" in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto
" all men, in that he hath raised him from the
" dead." Thus God the Judge in the person of Christ sits upon the throne, clothed in human nature, and tries men by a Judge, who in one sense is bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, and even calls them brethren.

When this throne of judgement shall be erected, this earth and the visible heavens or solar system of which it forms a part shall be dissolved. Of this dissolution the apostle Peter thus speaks; 2 Pet. iii. 7. "But the heavens and the earth
" which are now, by the same word are kept in
" store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men." And verse 10th, "But the day of the Lord will come as
" a thief in the night; in the which the heavens
" shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the
" earth also and the works that are therein shall
" be burnt up."

That

That some time shall intervene between the complete overthrow of Gog and Magog and the day of judgement, and that the precise length of time is known to God only, has been shewn already. As in the narrative the day of judgement follows close upon the final overthrow of Gog and Magog, it is thereby intimated that from that time to the day of judgement the reign of truth, righteousness, peace, and joy, shall not be greatly interrupted in the world. All men of every country, age, rank, or character, shall appear before that tribunal. The rich and the poor, the greatest monarch and the meanest slave, the philosopher and the peasant, the infidel and the believer, the wiseman and the fool, the good and the bad, those who shall then be alive on the earth, who shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and those whose bodies are in the grave, shall stand before God.

“The books were opened.” As written laws and written evidence are the best fences of justice, to express the perfect justice of this court it is said, the books were opened. These are the books which contain the written laws, and the records in which the evidence of the facts are inserted. The plain meaning of this symbol is, that every person in whatever country or age he lived, shall at last be judged by those rules of faith and conduct with which he had been favoured.

Those

These were to him as a written law. He shall not be judged by advantages or rules of which he was necessarily ignorant, though other persons were favoured with them. These were not written laws to him.

In the passage cited in Rom. ii. three general systems of laws are mentioned, by which men shall be tried at the final judgement. The first is the law of the Gentiles, the law written in the heart, which is commonly stiled the law of nature. The second is "the law," by which in scripture, in this and many other passages, is meant the written law of Moses. And the third is "the gospel," which is the dispensation of revealed religion published to the world by Christ and his apostles. Under one or other of these, all men, in every age and country of the world, have been placed. That same impartial justice, which will try every man by the law under which he lived, will certainly try him by the degree in which any of these laws were in fact promulgated to him, every circumstance of his constitution, temper, and situation being duly attended to. The facts, also, for which they shall be tried, shall be stated and proven as from written records. They shall be brought forth from the perfect omniscience of God. Every intention, word, and action, which form the real character, are perfectly known to God, and shall be brought forth to view as authen-

tic evidence for or against them, when they shall stand at his bar. They shall be brought forth from the book of men's own conscience. Men shall then recollect those intentions, words, and actions, which had formed their character ; at least they shall all be perfectly satisfied that they were, in fact, exactly such as they are stated by the Judge.

It is added, " And another book was opened, " which is the book of life." Besides these two books, by which mankind, in general, shall be tried, there is a book of another kind, by which true Christians shall be tried. This other book is the book of life. By the book of life, we are to understand all those persons, whom God knows to be alive as intelligent, rational, moral, and religious creatures, all who are spiritually alive in Christ Jesus. At that day, God will approve of all such persons, and admit them into the joys of heaven, not because, when in this world, they always acted in perfect conformity to those rules of conduct with which they were favoured ; not because their own consciences shall not then recollect any failings or transgressions ; but because they have been made alive in Christ Jesus, have heartily embraced that method of salvation, which the mercy of God hath offered to them through the mediation of Christ, and have been made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, by
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the spiritual life begun, and gradually brought to perfection in them. “There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. To be carnally minded is death : but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” The phrase, or rather the symbol, “the book of life,” is used eight times in scripture, and uniformly all these times, to signify those persons whom God knows to be spiritually alive, viz. Philipp. iv. 3. Rev. iii. 5. xiii. 8. xvii. 8. xx. 12, 15. xxi. 27, and xxii. 19.

So perfect is the divine standard of duty to man, and so defective is the obedience of the wisest and best Christians in this world, that even they could not be justified by that standard at the bar of God. But the gospel of Christ is a merciful system, wisely calculated for saving man, when by the perversion of his nature, he had disqualified himself for acting up to that perfect standard. As God hath promised eternal life to all, who give the gospel of Christ that reception which they ought, and regulate their faith, dispositions and conduct by it, his truth and equity are engaged finally to save such persons. But all they, who are written in the book of life are such. In Psalm. xcvi. 12, 13. xcvi. 8, 9. we find the same difference marked between the manner in which God shall judge the world at large, and the people in particular,

that is, his Israel or spiritual worshippers, which is marked in the verse under our view, "let the fields be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord, for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: He shall judge the *world* with *righteousness*, and the *people* with his *truth*. Let the floods clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together, before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: with *righteousness* shall he judge the *world* and the *people* with *equity*."

At that tribunal, all the dead, without one exception, shall be tried by one or other of these books, according to their works. However unwilling some men may be to come to this judgment, none shall be able to absent themselves, and no barrier shall detain them. Wherever their dead bodies shall be deposited, though in the bottom of the depths of the sea, whether they shall have been long in their graves, or shall be newly dead and unburied, they shall be raised to life. For the sea and death shall deliver up the dead, which are in them. "And hell shall deliver up the dead, which are in it." *Ἅδης*, the word here translated hell, signifies the invisible state of departed spirits. It comprehends under it the states of both good and bad separate spirits. Though, by death, the souls and bodies of men are separated; though their bodies are reduced to dust in their graves,

graves, or in the bottom of the sea ; and though their spirits are, in their separate states, happy or miserable according to their respective characters ; yet before the general judgement shall commence, their dead bodies shall be raised to life ; their separate spirits shall be reunited to them, never more to be separated ; and the whole man, consisting of soul and body, shall stand before the bar of God to receive his final sentence.

To those who either deny the resurrection of the dead, or put cavilling questions on that subject, I reply, in the words of Christ to the Sadducees, Matth. xxii. 29. “ Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.” For the scriptures, not to mention many other passages both in the Old and new Testament, I refer them to 1 Cor. chap. xv. where this subject is fully treated. And as to the power of God, it is certainly as easy for omnipotence to raise the bodies of men from the dust, and to reunite their souls to them, as it was at first to make the body of man out of the dust of the earth, to breath into him the breath of life, and make him a living soul.

The resurrection does not imply in it any natural impossibility ; it is therefore a work which comes within the sphere of divine power. It's possibility is already proven by fact. The body of Christ rose from the dead. This fact is as fully proven as any fact can be. But what hath once happened

happened is not impossible ; and, may happen again. We need not trouble our heads about fixing the essential stamina of every body, nor what it is by which the identity of the body, of the spirit, and of the man made up of the union of both, shall be ascertained. These things are not revealed to us in scripture ; they are not necessary for us to know in our present state ; and they make no part of the scriptural doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. But we may be certain, that these things are perfectly known to God ; and that he, who is omniscient, shall be at no loss, at the general resurrection, to ascertain every body, every spirit, and the relation in which they stand to each other. We may be certain, that, when the dead shall arise, every person shall be conscious of his own identity. A wicked man, when suffering in a future state, shall have no doubt that he is the identically same person that sinned in this world, and a faithful servant of God, rejoicing in heaven, shall have no doubt that he is the same person who, on earth, adhered to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus. Then all men, Christians as well as others, shall be judged according to their works. Then it will be of no avail to a mere nominal Christian, that he hath been baptised according to the institution of Jesus, that he hath pretended to believe all the doctrines of the gospel, and that he hath paid
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an external regard to all its ordinances; if his baptism hath not bound him cheerfully to observe all things whatsoever Christ commanded his Apostles to teach us; if the name of Christian hath not been connected with the Christian character in him; if his faith hath not purified his heart, wrought by love, and produced in him the peaceable fruits of righteousness; and, if his external regard to the ordinances of religious worship hath not proceeded from, and encreased in him, real piety and devotion of soul to God. In Matth. vii. 21,—23. Christ saith, “not every one that saith unto me, “ Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but, he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many shall say unto me in that day, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew: you depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

To be cast unto the lake of fire, or in plain terms to be cast into hell, is stiled the second death. Christ represents the torments of hell by the scorching of fire, Matth. xxv. 41. and Mark, ix. 44. These torments are stiled the second death; because they are preceded, in every person, by the first death both temporal and spiritual; and, because hell is the state of greatest degradation and misery to those beings who are consigned to such

misery. As hell is the last state to which wicked men shall be consigned, and as revelation gives us no information of any change that shall take place in them, after they shall enter into that state, when death and hell (*ᾠδης*), that is, the separate state, are said to be cast into the lake of fire; this symbol signifies that death and the separate state shall never more be heard of after that time.

Then no man's soul and body shall any more be dissolved by natural death, nor shall his spirit any more exist in a separate state. Death shall be swallowed up in victory. The immortality of the blessed will crown their bliss, and the immortality of the miserable will complete their wretchedness. All who shall not be then spiritually alive, all whose natures shall not be renewed, being totally unfit for heaven, shall be cast unto hell.

CHAP. XXI.

VISION XIV.

Verse 1st. **A**ND I saw a new heaven, and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

This chapter and the first five verses of the following one, are considered, by most of the commentators, as a description of the glory and happiness of the heavenly state, in a future world. But, if we examine this passage with candour and attention, we shall find in it the most satisfactory internal evidence, that it is not a description of the heavenly state. Very many of the principal features of this hieroglyphic cannot possibly suit the heavenly state. That state cannot, with propriety, be called a *new* heaven. We have no reason to suppose that any other local heaven, than the present one, shall be made for the reception of the

faints. Much less can it be stiled a new *earth*. *Earth* never can be a description of heaven. These two words, whether used symbolically or literally, always signify two different places or states. There is not a single instance, in any writing divine or human, of their signifying the same place or state. And what relation can sea have to the heavenly world? The new Jerusalem instead of ascending unto heaven, is said to be coming down from God *out of heaven*. It is said, “the tabernacle of God” is with men, and he will dwell with them;” as it is in the original, tabernacle with them for a short time. This is a plain proof that the heavenly state is not intended by this hieroglyphic. In the heavenly state, the tabernacle of God is not with men, but the temple in which men worship is with God; and God does not dwell with them for a short time, but they dwell with him for ever. It is said, that “the kings of the earth do bring their glory” and honour unto the new Jerusalem, and they “shall bring the glory and honour of the nations” unto it.” If this referred to the heavenly state, how could the kings of the earth bring their glory and honour and those of the nations unto it?

As the earth shall be dissolved with fervent heat, at the time of the final judgement, there will be neither earth, nor nations, nor kings upon it, to bring their glory into heaven after that period. It is also said that the leaves of the tree of life, are for
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the *healing* of the nations. This symbol cannot apply to the heavenly state; both because there would then be no nations to be healed; because there will then be no earth in existence; and if by nations were meant the inhabitants of heaven, they would need no healing, because they are perfect in vigour of body and mind.

It is impossible to reconcile these symbols with a description of the heavenly state; and yet these are all leading features in the picture, which is drawn in this and the following chapter. But that they contain a beautiful hieroglyphic of the glorious and happy state of the church of Christ, and of the world, during the millennium, is evident from the following reasons. 1st, As hath been shewn, the description cannot agree to the heavenly state. 2d, As shall appear in the commentary upon it, every part of it exactly agrees to the millennial state of the church, and of the world. 3d, It exactly corresponds to the various prophetic descriptions of the millennium given by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Micah, and is frequently expressed in their very words, as shall be shewn in the commentary upon it. And 4th, because, considered in this point of view, this description of the millennium corresponds to the form of this book in its other predictions.

The invariable form of writing, which runs through the whole of this book, is first to give a

short and general view of the particular event which is predicted, and afterwards to give a full description or illustration of it. And, most commonly, a short account of some other event, which is not the principal object of the prophecy, but some way connected with it, is thrown in between the first short view, and the second full description of the chief object of the prophecy. Thus, the prediction of the beast with the seven heads and the ten horns, in chap. xiii. is fully illustrated and explained in chap. xvii. The general account of the fall of Babylon in chap. xiv. is enlarged and illustrated in chap. xviii. And the short account of the seven vials in chap. xv. 1. 6, 7. is fully illustrated in chap. xvi. In every one of these predictions, certain other predictions are thrown in between the first general view and the subsequent full description, as the reader may see by turning to these passages. In like manner, the short general account given of the millennium in chap. xx. 1,—6. is fully illustrated in chap. xxi. and chap. xxii. 1,—6. As in all the other instances, so in this, a short account of some other events is thrown in between the general account and the full description. These events are the battle of Gog and Magog against the saints, the resurrection of the dead, the general and final judgement, and the final doom of mankind. In point of time, these follow, in course, upon the millennium. And

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John gives a description of each of these events strictly correspondent to the general strain of scripture on these subjects. Then, at chap. xxi. he resumes the subject of the millennium, and illustrates it fully.

We have no reason to expect a more particular and full description of the heavenly state, in this book, than those descriptions of it which are frequent in the other parts of scripture. However general these are, most probably they are as particular as the present state of our faculties can admit. A description, which cannot be understood by us, in the present state of our faculties, is to us no description at all. But the heavenly state is so pure, spiritual, and perfect, that, most probably, human language could not furnish words for a plain and particular description of it, and human intellect, in its present state, could not understand such a description. Such words would be like those which Paul heard in Paradise, “unspeakable, and “which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” But, on the other hand, we have great reason to expect a full description of the millennium, in this book. Is it ever to be supposed, that the spirit of God would favour men with a full description of the Papal hierarchy, of the fall of spiritual Babylon, of the plagues which should be brought upon Rome, and of the persecuted state of the Christian church; and yet give them only a short hint of the
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millennian state of the church and of the world in the first six verses of chap. 20. Is it ever to be supposed, that this most glorious and happy state of the church and of the world, the sabbatical millenary, shall not be as fully described, at least, as any of these other events? This is the great and glorious æra, to which all these events lead. Shall they be fully described, and shall it be dismissed with a short hint? As we shall proceed, it will appear that striking intimations of this glorious æra run through the whole of the Old and New Testament scriptures, and are closely interwoven with the language of scripture. Is it not, therefore, highly reasonable to expect a full description of it before the canon of scripture should be closed? Having premised these necessary observations let us now proceed to consider the description itself.

At this period John saw “a new heaven and a new earth.” It was early shewn, that *heaven* is the symbol for the church of Christ, and the *earth* that for the kingdoms of the earth, particularly for the Roman empire. By the *new* heaven it is predicted that, at the commencement of the millennium, the church of Christ shall assume a new appearance; and, by the new earth, that the civil kingdoms of the world shall also assume a new appearance at that time,

He assigns two reasons for this change. The first
is,

is, that the "first heaven and the first earth were "passed away." The persecuted wilderness state of the church shall then be at an end. The Christian church which formerly consisted of scattered individuals, in this or that external church, shall then be no more. And the Roman empire, in the fall of its seventh and last head, shall be totally dissolved, and the few kingdoms of the world, who shall adhere to it to the last, shall be buried in its ruins.

And second, "That there was no more sea." Sea is the symbol for a troubled, dissolved, fluctuating and tumultuous state of civil society. During the millennium, there shall be none of that fluctuating and tumultuous state of civil society, in which revolutions are generated; which at once proceed from, and are accomplished by, the disorder of both church and state.

On what account the church of Christ and the kingdoms of the world shall then be denominated new, may be seen from the following passages of scripture: Isa. lxxv. 17,—25. (the reader is desired to consult that passage). 2 Pet. iii. 13. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for a "new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth "righteousness."—Rom. xiv. 17. "For the "kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but "righteousness and peace, and joy in the holy "Ghost;" and Matth. vi. 10. "Thy kingdom come, "thy

“thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven;” and also from comparing the description of the wilderness state of the church in chapters xi. and xii. with that of her triumphant state in this chapter, and the account given of the kings of the earth in chap. xiii. 5,—7. with that given of them, in this chap. verses 24th, 26th.

All these passages have a plain reference to one another, and to the words now under our view. From them, it is evident that the church of Christ shall then be justly called *new* on the following accounts. Because it shall be strictly modelled, in doctrine, worship, obedience, and discipline, on the word of God contained in the sacred scriptures.—It shall no longer be confined to narrow bounds; but shall extend over the greatest part of the world.—There shall no longer be any opposition between Jew and Christian; but both shall be united in one church, believing in Moses as the servant, and in Christ as the Son of God.—It shall no longer consist of pure individuals scattered among corrupt churches of various denominations; but of one universal pure church.—It shall no longer be persecuted; but shall enjoy uninterrupted peace, prosperity, and triumph.—The kingdom of Christ, which is not meats and drinks, but righteousness, peace, and joy, shall then come; and therefore the will of God shall be done on earth, as it is in heaven: Nothing but righteousness and joy shall dwell

in the Christian church. And especially because, in the full extent of the prediction of Jeremiah, chap. xxxi. 31,—34. “the days shall be come, “when the Lord will make a *new covenant* with “the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, “—when he will put his law in their inward parts “and write it in their hearts, and will be their “God, and they shall be his people,—and they “shall all know him from the least of them unto “the greatest of them.”

It is thus that all the members of the *new* heaven, shall be *new* creatures. And the civil kingdoms of this world shall be filed *new*, because, though civil governments and governors shall be continued for the right regulation of men as social creatures, yet both the subjects and sovereigns shall be so much regulated by that religion, which is truth, righteousness, peace, and joy, that righteousness and peace only shall dwell in these kingdoms;—a sacred regard shall be paid by every one to the rights of every one;—private contentions, and public wars shall, therefore, cease to the ends of the earth, and universal peace shall prevail for a thousand years;—kings, instead of persecuting the church of Christ, shall be nursing fathers, and queens shall be nursing mothers unto her, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour unto the church of Christ.

Verse 2d,—And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Antient Jerusalem was called the holy city, because the temple consecrated to the worship of God was built in it, and the tribes of Israel went up to worship God in that city, at all the three great annual feasts. Hence, as a symbol, it signifies the church of Christ, especially when the epithet *new* is prefixed to it.

By comparing the symbol for the church of Christ in its persecuted state, under Papal Rome, for 1243 years, as it is drawn in chap. xi. 1, 2. with the symbol used in this place, it will be perfectly clear that “new Jerusalem, the holy city,” is the symbol for the triumphant millennial state of the Christian church, which shall commence immediately upon the final overthrow of Papal Rome.

In chap. xi. 1, 2. it is said, “And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not: for it is given unto the Gentiles, and the holy city shall they tread under foot.”

“foot *forty and two months.*” During these 42 months or 1243 years, the church of Christ was to be very narrow, like the temple and the altar: but the outer court and the *holy city* of Jerusalem were to be trampled under foot of Papal Rome, for that period of time. When that period is accomplished, the holy city, the new Jerusalem, appears in all her glory, extent, and magnificence, as the hieroglyphic for the enlarged, purified, and triumphant state of the church.

The city and the gates, which were left out in the measurement in chap. xi. are now particularly measured, in verse 15th of this chapter. The new Jerusalem comes down from God out of heaven, to signify that the Christian church shall, then, in every respect, be formed upon the inspired scriptures, that standard of Christianity, which is from God. It proceeds from *heaven*, even from that persecuted Christian church, which, through the whole of this book, hath been called heaven. It shall then appear, that those persecuted men in every age and country, who adhered to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus, were the instruments under God, of gradually bringing the world at large to the belief, acknowledgement, and obedience of the truth, and consequently, of bringing about that triumphant and enlarged state of the church, so beautifully represented by the new Jerusalem.

“ Jerusalem shall be prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” This is the same description, which is given of the church of Christ, at the commencement of the millennium in chap. xix. 6,—9. By the similarity or rather identity of the description, the same state and period of the church are signified. Isaiah hath repeatedly predicted this triumphant state of the church, by the same symbols of the prosperity of Jerusalem, and of her being married to the Lord. Isaiah. liv. 5. “ For thy *maker is thy husband*, (the Lord of hosts “ is his name); and thy redeemer the holy One of “ Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be “ called.” (The reader is desired to read the whole chapter as a prediction of the millennium and also the whole lxii. chap.) Isaiah. lxii. 1. 2, 4, 5, “ For “ Zions sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the “ salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And “ the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all “ kings thy glory : and thou shalt be called by a “ *new* name, which the mouth of the Lord shall “ name.—Thou shalt no more be termed, Forsaken ; neither shall thy land any more be termed, “ Desolate : but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, “ and thy land, Beulah : for the Lord delighteth “ in thee, and thy land shall be *married* ;—as the “ bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy “ God

“ God rejoice over thee. Verse 12th, And they
“ shall call them the *holy* people, the redeemed of
“ the Lord : and thou shalt be called, Sought out,
“ a city not forsaken.” “ Isaiah. lxxv. 18, 19. But
“ be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I
“ create: for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing,
“ and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Je-
“ rusalem and joy in my people. Isaiah. xl. 1, 2.
“ Comfort ye, comfort ye my people. Speak ye
“ comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that
“ her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is
“ pardoned.” All these chapters of Isaiah, are
striking predictions of the millennium.

Verses 3d, 4th, 5th.—And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne, said, behold I make all things new. And he said unto me, write: for these words are true and faithful.

A tabernacle is a temporary tent or lodging, not intended for a lasting habitation like an house or a temple. Σκηνωσι, which is here translated to dwell, signifies to tabernacle, that is, to dwell for a short time as in a tent. This symbol signifies, that this glorious and triumphant state of the church is not that heavenly state, in which the saints shall dwell with God forever; but that state in this world, in which their worship of God shall be so pure and uninterrupted, and their communion with him so close, that the tabernacle of God may be said to be with men, and he may be said to tabernacle with them on earth.

The millennium, as the seventh millenary or great sabbath of the whole earth, is beautifully represented here, by the tabernacle of God being with men, and by men enjoying communion with God. During this period, men shall be the people of God. He shall put his law within them, and write it upon their hearts. As his subjects they shall know, and cheerfully obey his laws. They shall be a willing and a peculiar people to him zealous of good works. God himself shall be with them. His providence and grace shall guide, protect, and bless them. They shall never lose sight of God. He shall be always present with their minds, to influence and bless them. He shall be their God. Him, and him only, they shall esteem, love,

love, worship, serve, and enjoy supremely in spirit and in truth.

The purity of the worship of the people of God, and the closeness of their communion with God, is beautifully expressed by the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, when predicting the millennium, in terms very similar to those now under our view. Jeremiah xxxi. 31,—34. Ezekiel xxxvii. 15,—28. The millennial state of the church of Christ and of the world, shall be so like the paradisaical state, that it is described in these verses, and in some following parts of this and the next chapter, by symbols drawn from that state. In Paradise, because man was upright as God made him, and all the creatures were good, there was no pain, crying, sorrow, nor death, until man, by eating the forbidden fruit, forfeited life and happiness, drew upon himself banishment from Paradise, and a curse upon the ground, for his sake. In the millennial state, when men shall be much wiser and better, than they have ever been in any other period of the world, since they were banished Paradise; they shall be much freer from suffering and sorrow, and much happier than they had been in any former period.

This happiness shall arise from the two sources, from which it proceeded in Paradise, a well regulated mind, and a most favourable outward situation. As happiness can only be enjoyed by man, when

when his mental faculties are rightly disposed for perceiving and relishing their objects, no man can be truly happy even in the most favourable outward situation, whose mind is not properly regulated. There is no peace unto the wicked; his heart is like the troubled sea, which cannot rest. He, whose mind is rightly disposed can enjoy a very high degree of happiness in himself, and, above all, in God as his chief good, even in the most unfavourable outward situation. Like the apostles of Christ, he can sing hymns of praise in prison and in chains. Like the Prophet Habakkuk, although the fig-tree does not blossom, though there is no fruit in the vine, though the labour of the olive fails, and the fields yield no meat, though the flock is cut off from the fold, and there is no herd in the stall, he rejoices in the Lord, and joys in the God of his salvation. But, so long as men are in their present embodied state, in which the mind perceives, feels, and acts, through the channels of the bodily senses, and they are surrounded by material objects adapted to these senses, the outward situation of man must have some influence upon the degree or permanency of his enjoyment.

The predictions in this chapter, and those throughout the whole bible relative to this period, represent it as particularly distinguished for both these sources of human happiness. Truth and
righteousness

righteousness shall then prevail in the world. It is not easy for us, at present, to conceive to how high a degree of refinement and elevation human happiness might arise, even in such a state of things as the present, did truth and righteousness universally prevail among men. But imagination must lose itself, and fly almost beyond the sphere of human thought, when it wings its way towards that height of terrestrial bliss, to which a world of wise and good men shall ascend, when there shall be nothing to hurt or annoy in all God's holy mountain;—when God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;—when there shall be no spiritual death; and when, for that reason natural death shall be stripped of its terror;—when men shall be vigorous, healthy and long-lived;—and when there shall be no more crying, sorrow, nor pain. It is assigned as the reason of all this, that the former things are passed away, and that God who sits upon the throne, and sways the scepter of the universe shall then renew all things; not men only but *all things*.

It is clear from the words now under our view, and from many other passages of scripture, to which I shall soon direct the attention of the reader, that there shall, then, be a kind of renovation of the world, or a bringing it back to something like its original or paradisaical state, in the following particulars, at least.—The Devil shall be

refrained from tempting men, for a thousand years. When he was permitted to tempt the first parents of mankind, they soon sinned and forfeited Paradise, and if he were not restrained by the particular interposition of God, it is highly probable that universal righteousness would not dwell in the new heavens and the new earth.—Wars shall cease to the ends of the earth, and universal peace shall prevail.—The brute creatures, gently treated by man, shall become gentle to man, and to each other. “The wolf also shall dwell with
“the lamb, and the leopard shall ly down with the
“kid: and the calf, and the young lion, and the
“fatling together, and a little child shall lead
“them. And the cow and the bear shall feed,
“their young ones shall ly down together; and
“the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the suck-
“ing child shall play upon the hole of the asp,
“and the weaned child shall put his hand upon
“the cockatrice den. They shall not hurt nor
“destroy in all God’s holy mountain; for the earth
“shall be full of the knowledge of God, as the
“waters cover the sea.”

In reference to this peaceful and happy state of the brute creation, at the time of the manifestation of the sons of God, they are represented, by Paul, Rom. viii. 18,—23. as directing their earnest expectation to that state of the world.—Then, in all probability, a more mild and temperate state
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of the air shall take place; and the earth, under the influence of a better climate shall become much more fruitful. There shall be no more curse; and among the rest, most probably, that curse which made the earth bring forth briers and thorns, and doomed man to earn his food by the sweat of his brow, shall be taken away.

I do not stop to produce philosophical conjectures, to account for the temperature of the air, or for the fruitfulness of the earth. Without supposing any change in the figure, situation, or motion of this earth, or of any of the other parts of this solar system; it is perfectly easy for the Almighty to render the air mild, and the earth fruitful. Let us never forget, that it is a part of the soundest philosophy that all the inanimate, as well as all the animate creatures of God are perpetually dependent upon their Creator, and must become the most pliant instruments in his hands. He says to the sea, "Hitherto shall thou come, and no further; and here shall thy proud waves be staid." It is he, "who binds the sweet influences of Pleiades, "and looses the bands of Orion: who brings forth "Mazzaroth in his season, and guides Arcturus "with his sons: who knows the ordinances of heaven, and sets the dominion thereof in the earth." Without being able to assign any philosophical cause for it, have we not sometimes met with a particular year, in which the air hath been un-

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commonly

commonly mild, and the earth uncommonly fruitful? And is not one day or one year with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one year or one day, in this as well as in other respects?

But a good moral reason may be assigned for that temperature of the air; and fruitfulness of the earth: Even that men, because righteous, are fit for bearing such a state of things. Wicked men cannot have plenty, and idleness in their power, without running to great excess in wickedness. When the mind is not well informed, and rightly employed, which it is not in wicked men, nothing but bodily employment can keep them from excessive wickedness. Wherever there is a town peopled with opulent and idle men, there iniquity abounds. But as righteousness only dwells in the new earth, freedom from bodily labour will be improved to mental cultivation, employment, and delight.

In that state men will be healthful, vigorous and long-lived. "There shall be no more death.
"There shall be no more thence an infant of days,
"nor an old man that hath not fulfilled his days:
"for the child shall die an hundred years old.
"They shall not build, and another inhabit; they
"shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days
"of a tree are the days of my people, and mine
"elect shall long enjoy the works of their hands."

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For the health and longevity of men in this period, the following reasons, together with the divine appointment and blessing, may be assigned, the temperature of the air, the fruitfulness of the earth, the regular government of the human passions and the general virtue of men.

In the present state of things, feebleness of constitution, diseases, and death, are very frequently generated and propagated by the vices of men, and proceed from the violence of passion, the defective quality or quantity of the food, or the intemperature of the climate; but when all these defects shall be removed, for a thousand years together, it is not easy to conceive to what a degree the millennial state of the air, of the earth, of the minds of men, and of the good conduct of the world, under the blessing of God, may strengthen and prolong human life: more especially, when the longer such men live on earth, the more good will they do to society, and the more will they be prepared for heaven.—And men, entertaining right apprehensions of, and affections to God, shall enjoy uniform and supreme happiness in communion with him. They shall neither be afraid nor ashamed to avow their worship of God. They shall never think it a reflection upon their intellectual powers, nor shall any person represent them as weak men, because they raise their views above the creatures to the great Creator of all, and regard
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it as the first duty of man to act agreeably to the first, the most important and permanent relation in which he is placed, that in which he stands to his God. "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them. They shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. They shall see his face, and his name shall be in their forehead. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord."

The passages in scripture, which predict, refer to, and describe the millennian state of the church and of the world, besides these contained in this book, are so many and so large, that it would be improper to transcribe them into this commentary. I shall therefore only point them out to the reader, and request of him to read and consider them with candour and attention. Deut. xxxii. 43. Psalm ii. Daniel ii. 44, 45. vii. 13, 14, 27. Isaiah ii. 1,—5. xi. xxxii. xxxv. xliii. 1,—8. xlix. and the greatest part of Isaiah from chap. lx. to chap. lxvi. inclusive. Ezekiel xxxvii. 15,—28. Micah iv. Matth. vi. 10. Rom. viii. 18,—23. and 2 Pet. 3, 13.

To shew that all these passages refer to, or predict and describe the millennium, would be to write a long dissertation upon them. But every intelligent person who reads them with candour and care, will clearly perceive that they predict a pure,

a glorious, a peaceful and a happy state of the world and of the church of Christ; which hath never yet taken place, and which can accord only to that millennial state, which hath already been described in part, and shall be more fully described, as we proceed in this and the following chapter. Can any person, who believes the inspiration of scripture, ever suppose that so many clear predictions of such a glorious and triumphant state of the church, and of the world, are contained in the bible, and that yet that state shall never take place?

And he said unto me write; for these words are true and faithful. God who sat upon the throne, commanded John to write the preceding words of this chapter. And he assigns two reasons, why he should write them. First because they are true. No man should knowingly write what is false. It is essential to all inspired writings that they are true, because God cannot be deceived, and he can deceive no man. And second, because they are faithful. The word in the original signifies either faithful or credible. In both senses it may be used here. They are faithful because as predictions, they shall all be exactly accomplished in the appointed time. And they are credible because they are part of a book of prophecies, of whose inspiration sufficient evidence is produced.—A book, which hath long ago been proven to be a true prophecy

phesy by the many events in the history of the church and of the world, by which its early predictions have been regularly and minutely accomplished. They are credible, because they predict a state of purity, peace, and prosperity to the Christian religion, which it is highly reasonable to expect, if it is a religion from God. It is unreasonable to suppose that a religion from God shall never triumph over ignorance, error, superstition, and vice, in this world. Gamaliel reasoned justly, when he said of Christianity, "If this work is of God, ye cannot overthrow it."

Verses 6th, 7th, 8th.—And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end: I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and forcers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

The same person, who sat upon the throne, and
who

who commanded John to write these words, said unto him: It is done. By this expression he intimated that all the prophecies of this book are finished. After this, no new events shall be predicted in this book; but all that follows in it shall be only explanatory of events already predicted in it, or exhortations to those persons who shall read it. He calls himself Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. This name was given to Christ, in chap. i. 8. where the import of it was explained in the commentary. Here it is only necessary to observe, that he who sits upon the throne, and Christ, is the same being, and consequently that this is a plain declaration of the divinity of Christ.

Life, as was formerly shewn, is the intellectual and spiritual life. The water of life signifies intellectual and spiritual nourishment and pleasures. The fountain of these waters of life is God, the fountain of all intellectual and spiritual life and joy. Accordingly God is frequently styled the fountain of life, and of living waters, in scripture. Thus Psalm xxxvi. 9. "With thee is the fountain of life." Jeremiah. ii. 13. "They have forsaken me the fountain of living waters." And in chap. xxii. 1. of this book, it is said that the river of the water of life proceedeth out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, that is from God, the Father, through the mediation of Christ. God only hath

this spiritual life in himself, and from him only it is communicated to his intelligent and moral creatures. The most pure and plentiful fountain of water communicates nourishment, refreshment, and pleasure, to the man only who is athirst. In like manner, the most pure and large objects of intellectual, moral, and religious improvement and joy, will be pursued, perceived, and relished, only by the man who has a strong desire for them. The bodily appetite is not more necessary for sensual gratification than the mental affection is for mental enjoyment. Those who are athirst are all who sincerely and ardently desire to know, love, imitate, and enjoy God. To all such God promises, that their desire shall be gratified. This desire shall not merit that blessing; but shall only excite them to apply for it, and qualify them to receive, use, and enjoy it in a right manner. Is it possible that the dependent creature can merit from its independent Creator? What hast thou that thou hast not first received from him? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or it is any gain to him that thou makest thy way perfect? Is it possible that the sinner who hath never been able of late to keep the commandments of God perfectly, [much less to atone for former transgressions, can merit any thing from his God but indignation? Even to them who are influenced by right desires God will bestow this blessing as a
free

free gift. He, who sat upon the throne, says, "I will *give* unto him that is athirst of the fountain of "the water of life *freely*." They shall receive the spiritual life from God himself, and shall derive the most pure and enlarged spiritual improvement and joy from the exercise of their intellectual and moral powers upon God himself. This promise exactly corresponds to the uniform language of scripture. "Ho every one that thirst-
"eth, Come ye to the waters. Blessed are they
"who do hunger and thirst after righteousness,
"for they shall be filled. Jesus answered them,
"and said, My doctrine is not mine but his that
"sent me. If any man *will do his will*, he shall
"know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or
"whether I speak of myself. In the last, that
"great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried,
"saying, If any man thirst let him come unto me
"and drink. And ye will not come to me that
"ye might have life." Every man who sincerely and ardently desires to know, imitate, and enjoy God, that is, to be truly wise, good, and happy, shall be made wise and good by the renewing influences of the Spirit of God, and by the various dispensations of divine providence and grace to him; and shall be happy in the contemplation and enjoyment of God himself, whatever may be his outward situation in this world. The spiritual life shall acquire strength in him as he passes

through this world, and his spiritual joy shall increase with it, until they shall both become perfect together in the heavenly state, where he shall see God as he is, where the divine image shall shine unclouded in his nature, and he shall enjoy God perfectly, uninterruptedly, and perpetually. Let no man therefore complain that he is not wise, good, and happy. If you do sincerely and ardently desire to be so, God by his providence and grace will make you so, and in himself you shall ever have a perfect standard of conduct, and an inexhaustible fund of enjoyment. But if you have no such desire, you may indeed complain of your own folly in not endeavouring to acquire and cultivate it; but you have no reason to complain of God for not giving you those blessings which you never sincerely wished he should give you. Until you are possessed of such a desire, nothing can make you wise, good, and happy. While without it, you want the mental faculty for studying, perceiving, and relishing truth, virtue, and happiness; as well may the blind man see and be pleased with colours, before his eyes are opened; as well may the deaf man hear and be delighted with sounds, before his ears are unstopped; as that you could perceive, attain, or relish truth, virtue, and happiness, while you have no desire for them in your soul. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness."

ness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The want of this desire is not a natural defect, but it is a moral disability. Hence this disability not only disqualifies you, while it continues, for making attainments in duty and happiness, but is itself criminal. Not to esteem and desire what you ought highly to esteem and desire, must be depravity and sin. But hence it is that this disability, because moral, may be removed in the same way in which all other moral disabilities in man may be removed. Turn your attention to the nature and value of truth, of virtue, and true happiness, and to the great interest which you have in them ; frequently trace the illustrious displays of the natural and moral perfections of God in his works of creation, providence, and redemption, and in his word ; and thus in your thoughts gradually ascend to the contemplation of supreme excellency, goodness, and amiableness in God himself. Search the scriptures, attend on the preaching of the word, and frequently and sincerely pray to God through the mediation of Christ, that by his good Spirit he would excite in you such a desire ; and you need not despair of success. " For this is the will of God, even your sanctification. And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us." He who in this world overcomes the various temptations

tations and trials to which he hath been exposed, shall inherit all things. To inherit, is frequently used in scripture to signify to enjoy with a peculiar relish and advantage. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." But "those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth." There is something in the very idea of inheritance or property, which makes men enjoy the same thing with much greater relish after it becomes their property than they could have done when it was the property of another person, though that person should have freely given them the use of it. By this term the peculiar relish with which truly godly men enjoy all things is beautifully expressed. They enjoy God supremely, they enjoy themselves, they enjoy all things which they possess, because on every one of them they place no higher affection than it deserves, and they expect no more good from it than it actually contains, and that quantity it will always yield. They enjoy every dispensation of divine providence to them, because, whether outwardly adverse or prosperous, they are satisfied that whatever God allots to them is best for them if they rightly improve it. They enjoy those things which are possessed by others. Animated with the benevolence and brotherly affection of Christians, they rejoice with those who rejoice. They are happy on account of the happiness of others. The means,

means, instruments, and objects of other persons happiness, so far as they are innocent, for that reason communicate happiness to them. Whilst the envious man, vexing himself because his neighbour is happy, cannot enjoy his possessions because his neighbour has better ones, the benevolent Christian enjoys every virtuous pleasure which can be derived from his neighbour's possessions, without any alloy from this thought, that they are the property of another person. They shall also inherit all things, because, like their property, all things shall in fact promote their real interest, Adversity, prosperity, health, sickness, riches, poverty, the means and ministers of religion, persecution for conscience sake, the things which they possess, and the things which they want, life and death, shall all be overruled by God for promoting their best interest, even their improvement and happiness. Of such persons Paul says, 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22. "All things are yours, whether Paul, or " Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or " death, or things present, or things to come, *all* " are yours. And ye are Christ's: and Christ is " God's." God will be his God. To inherit all things is a great and an inestimable blessing, but to have God for his God is the highest possible blessing of man: for God is all and in all. God will be his saviour, his sanctifier, the sole object of his worship, his preserver, his guide, the standard
of

of his character, and his chief good in every stage of his existence. The contemplation of God in this world, in the glass of his works and of his word, and in the face of Jesus, and in a future world, as it were face to face, immediately and intuitively as one pure spirit beholds another, shall employ, enlarge, improve, and delight, all his intellectual and moral powers. He shall be a son of God. Besides Christ, who, because the Son of God in a sense peculiar to himself and incommunicable to any other person, is called God's *only* begotten Son; there are three distinct persons who are stiled sons of God in scripture. These three are angels, Adam, and all real Christians or regenerated persons. Of angels Job says, chap. xxxvii. 7. "When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Luke, in tracing back the genealogy of Joseph, finishes it by calling Adam the son of God; thus, "Who was the son of Seth, who was the son of Adam, who was the son of God, chap. iii. 38. and of true Christians Paul saith, Rom. viii. 14. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." There are two essential qualities in which all these three agree, and on account of which they are stiled *sons of God*. The first quality is immediate creation by God, and the second is a resemblance of the intellectual and moral perfections of God. In these two qualities the very essence of sonship consists

sists in all who are styled the sons of God in scripture, excepting only Christ. He is styled the *only begotten* Son of God, because he is the son of God in a way entirely peculiar to himself; in a way which therefore does not imply creation or likeness to God, but which is consistent with self-existence and identity with God. Thus, angels received their existence immediately from the creating hand of God, and were made wise, righteous, and holy, like God. And Adam received his existence immediately from the creating hand of God, and was made after the image of God in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. In like manner, real Christians or regenerated persons are renewed by the Spirit of God in the spirit of their minds, and are brought again to resemble God in the state of their intellectual and moral powers. John i. 12, 13. "But as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe on his name; who were born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, but of God." Eph. iv. 23, 24. "And be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." 1 John iii. 10. "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." The sons of God therefore are those

men who are renewed by the Spirit of God after the image of God in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, and who, as the natural consequence of this new birth, manifest that they are the sons of God by doing righteousness, and loving one another with brotherly affection. Every one who overcomes the world shall be a son of God. The spiritual life shall be restored to him by the regenerating influence of the Spirit of God. His intellectual and moral powers shall be revived, corrected, improved, and at last perfected. And he shall be raised to, and secured for ever in the enjoyment of that pure and exalted happiness which accords to such a state of his faculties. As sons of God, they shall inherit the kingdom of God both in a present and future world. Rom. viii. 17. "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, " and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together." The excellence of this character, the extent of divine grace in bestowing it, and the degree of excellence and happiness to which it shall arise in a future state, far exceed the capacity of human faculties in their present state fully to comprehend, and the power of human language fully to express, 1 John iii. 1,—3. "Behold *what manner* of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, " that we should be called the *sons* of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew " him

“ him not. Beloved now are we the sons of God,
“ and it *doth not yet appear* what we shall be: but
“ we know that when he shall appear we shall be
“ like him, for we shall see him as he is. And e-
“ very man that hath this hope in him purifieth
“ himself even as he is pure.” Having described
the character and happiness of the faithful servants
of God, he who sitteth upon the throne enumerates
the various characters which shall be consigned to
hell, and shall be hurt of the second death. They
shall all be ranked under one or other of the eight
following classes. “The fearful.” All those persons
in whom the passion of *fear* predominates and re-
gulates their conduct. From the fear of losing the
favour or of incurring the displeasure of men, from
the fear of hurting their fame, their worldly inte-
rest, their liberty, or even endangering their lives in
this world, they either deny, do not profess, or
corrupt the truth of the gospel. If at any time
they attend to any duty which they owe to God,
they act not from a sense of duty, from love and
reverence to God, nor from an esteem for truth
and virtue; but from fear of the divine wrath,
from fear of hell. Their motive of action is that
of the slave, not that of the freemen, not that of
the sons of God. “The unbelieving.” All those
persons who do not in a tolerable proportion to
their opportunities and abilities candidly and dili-
gently examine the nature and evidence of the

leading truths of religion, and believe them with the assent of the understanding and the approbation of the heart. All who disbelieve the being of a God. All who, though favoured with the inspired scriptures of the Old and New Testament, yet do not believe that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God, nor the great truths of God contained in the sacred scriptures. "The abominable." In scripture, to worship God by merely external observances, while the heart is not engaged in his service, or to worship God by ordinances of mere human institution, even though the heart should be engaged, are both called an abomination to the Lord. The abominable therefore are all those persons who worship God by mere external observances, whilst they are strangers to the nature of religion and never felt its power in their hearts and lives, even though the ordinances which they observe are of divine institution;—those who worship God in hypocrisy, professing one thing, whilst they feel and intend another;—and those who worship by ordinances of mere human institution, observing as doctrines of God the commandments of men. "Murderers." Those persons, who with forethought malice take away the life of any of their fellow men, and those who though they do not imbrue their hands in their brother's blood, yet entertain hatred and malice against him, and rejoice in his misfortunes, his hurt, or his death.

"Whoremongers."

“Whoremongers.” All unchaste and unclean persons, who do not govern their sensual appetites by the laws of reason and of religion. “Sorcerers,” those persons who use charms and incantments of any kind. By the use of these, forcerers in fact deny the superintendency of divine providence through the intervention of ordinary means,—call upon God to interfere in a miraculous manner, when they have no authority for such a call,—or solicit the aid of evil spirits to obtain what they desire; all of which are highly impious. “Idolaters.” All those persons who pay religious worship to any other object than the only true God; or those who even worship the true God by images, or any other way which he hath not appointed. “And all liars.” To lie, is to say one thing with the mouth whilst another thing is meant by the heart, in order to deceive the hearer. Few sins are more atrocious in themselves or more hurtful in their consequences than lying. It is an insult to the omniscience or purity of God, a gross perversion of the power of speech which is the glory of our nature; and is deceit, disappointment, and therefore injustice to men. It tends to destroy the confidence of man in man, to foster in the soul hypocrisy to God, and to dissolve the strongest bands of society. Most probably no other sin is so common in the world. Who can count the lies which are raised and propagated in the world in order to serve political

litical purposes, the views of religious sects or parties, the pecuniary interests, the vanity, the resentment, the malice, and the envy of men, or to screen their real circumstances, their follies, or their vices. And when we look into scripture, we see this sin drawn by the pen of inspiration in the blackest colours and most deformed features. In all the full catalogues of sins it is the last, as being the greatest of them. It is represented as the surest mark of the depravity of human nature, as a certain evidence that those who practise it are the children of the Devil, and it is traced back to the Devil as its author, who is called "the father of lies." Besides the catalogue of sins in this verse, those for instance in verse 27. and in chap. xxii. 15. also close with this sin. Verse 27. And there "shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." Chap. xxii. 15. "For without are dogs, and forcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Col. iii. 9, 10. "*Lie* not one to another, seeing that ye have *put off the old man* with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him." Eph. iv. 24, 25. "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away *lying*, speak every

“ every man truth with his neighbour ; for ye are
“ members one of another.” John viii. 44. “ Ye
“ are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your
“ father ye will do ; he was a murderer from the
“ beginning, and abode not in the truth, because
“ there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a
“ lie, he speaketh of his own : for he is a liar, and
“ the father of it.” It is therefore no wonder that
this black catalogue of finners is closed with liars,
and that *all liars* are doomed to the lake which
“ burneth with fire and brimstone.”

Let it be here observed that it is not every degree of all or any of these sins for which men will be consigned to hell. For some degree of sin cleaves to the wisest and best of men in this world. “ If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,
“ and the truth is not in us. No man liveth and
“ finneth not.” But it is only when these sins or any of them so much predominate in men as to form their general character. It is not when men strive against these sins, but it is when they become the slaves of them. Under these eight classes may be comprehended all the finners on the earth which shall be consigned to hell. Every man whose real character hath come under some of these classes for some part of his life shall not be doomed to hell ; but those only who live and die impenitently, if any of these characters belong to them, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11.

Verses 9th.—21st.—And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, and her light was like unto a stone, most precious, even like a jasper-stone clear as crystal; and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. On the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth four square, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city, twelve thousand furlongs:

longs : the length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper : and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third a chalcedony, the fourth an emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth a topaz, the tenth a chryso-phrasus, the eleventh a jacinth, the twelfth an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls ; every several gate was of one pearl ; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

Agreeably to the idiom of prophetic writing, and to the particular construction of this book, an angel is introduced to give a full and distinct view of the new Jerusalem or millennium state of the Christian church, which had been predicted in the xx. chapter, and in the preceding part of this one, after the Papal hierarchy had been predicted in chap. xiii. In chap. xvii. 1. an angel is introduced

in a manner exactly similar to that of the angel in this passage, to present a striking picture of the Papal hierarchy and an explication of it, which he did in the whole xvii. chapter. In chap. xvii. 1. the angel said to John, "Come hither;" and in this passage the angel also says to John, "Come hither." By these similar expressions it is intimated, that each of these visions is limited to a particular scene, even to that on which the angel stood at the time when he gave each of these invitations, "Come hither." In the former instance it was the wilderness state of the church, even the period from the year of Christ 756 to the end of the year 1999. Verse 3d, "So he carried me away in the Spirit unto the *wilderness*." In this instance it is a great and high *mountain*. Verse 10th, "And he carried me away in the Spirit unto a great and high mountain." But what particular scene or state of the church and of the world is represented by this great and high mountain? This is the symbol for the millennial period of the church and of the world.

It was formerly shewn, that, in the symbolical language, a mountain signifies dominion or kingdom; because dominion or power elevates those who are vested with it above the rest of men, just as mountains are elevated above the surrounding plains. Hence the proper symbol for that period of the Christian church, when the kingdom of God shall come on earth, when the kingdom shall be given

given to the saints of the Most High, and when they shall be made kings and priests unto God, and shall reign with Christ a thousand years, is a *great* mountain, because that kingdom of God shall then extend over the whole earth; and a *high* mountain, because it shall then overtop every other kingdom on earth. By this symbol the millennial period is uniformly represented by the ancient prophets. Thus Daniel ii. 31,—45. I shall transcribe only verses 34, 35, 44, 45. but the reader is desired to read the whole passage. “Thou
 “ sawest till that a *stone* was cut out without
 “ hands, which smote the image upon his feet that
 “ were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces;
 “ then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver,
 “ and the gold broken to pieces together, and be-
 “ came like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors,
 “ and the wind carried them away that no place
 “ was found for them: and the stone that smote
 “ the image became a *great mountain*, and filled
 “ the whole earth. And in the days of these
 “ kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom
 “ which shall never be destroyed: and the king-
 “ dom shall not be left to other people, but it shall
 “ break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms,
 “ and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou
 “ sawest that the stone was cut out of the moun-
 “ tain without hands, and that it brake in pieces
 “ the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the
 “ gold: the great God hath made known to the

“ king what shall come to pass hereafter : and the
“ dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof
“ sure.”

In this passage Daniel predicts the rise and fall of the four great kingdoms, the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian, and Roman. And he also predicts the different appearances of the kingdom of God in the world in different periods. So long as any of these four kingdoms should continue, it is represented by the *stone* cut out without hands: but whenever the last of them should be totally and finally destroyed, that same stone should become *a great mountain*, and shall fill the whole earth. Hence it is perfectly clear, that the period in which the church of Christ is represented by a *great mountain* is that which shall commence upon the final overthrow of Rome under its last head, the Papal, which is the last of these four kingdoms. But, as was formerly shewn, the millennial period is to commence at that time, and on the very back of that event.

Isaiah predicting the millennial period uses the same symbol, chap. ii. 2,—4. “ And it shall come
“ to pass in the *last days* that the *mountain* of the
“ Lord’s house shall be established in the top of
“ the mountains, and shall be exalted above the
“ hills ; and all nations shall flow unto it. And
“ many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let
“ us go up to the *mountain* of the Lord, to the
“ house

“ house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us
 “ of his ways, and we will walk in his paths ; for
 “ out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word
 “ of the Lord from *Jerusalem*. And he shall judge
 “ among the nations, and shall rebuke many peo-
 “ ple ; and they shall beat their swords into plough
 “ shares, and their spears into pruning hooks : na-
 “ tion shall not lift up sword against nation, nei-
 “ ther shall they learn war any more.” All the
 particulars of this passage unite in marking the
 period of the *mountain* of God’s house as that
 of the *millennium*. This prediction respected
 the *last days*. This symbol, “the last days,”
 always signifies the period of the gospel, as
 distinguished from that of the Mosaic dispensa-
 tion. This mountain of the Lord’s house shall be
 established on the top of the mountains, and ex-
 alted above the hills, and all nations shall flow un-
 to it : and there shall be no more war. But that
 period when the kingdom of God shall be supreme
 in the world, when all nations shall flow unto it,
 and universal peace shall prevail on the earth, is
 the millennium. Micah predicting the same pe-
 riod uses the same symbol, and the very same de-
 scription, without almost a single word of varia-
 tion, chap. iv. 1,—3. This passage the reader is
 desired to examine, and particularly to notice
 that Micah, like Isaiah, expressly limits the period
 to which it refers to “*the last days*.” And Ezekiel
 when

when beginning his long and minute predictions of the millennial state, under the hieroglyphics of the temple, of the city of Jerusalem, and of the holy land, which fills up the whole last nine chapters of his prophecies ; in chap. xl. 2. fixes upon the same "*very high mountain*" as the scene of his vision : "In the visions of God brought he me
"into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very
" *high mountain*, by which was as the frame of a city
"on the south : " and in ch. xlviii. 35. "The name
"of the city from that day shall be the Lord is
"there." The whole of these nine chapters is a description of the millennial state, with a particular reference to what shall be the situation of the tribes of Israel at that period. By the name which he gives to the city that he describes, and with which he closes the description, "The Lord
"is there," he shews that his description of Jerusalem, and that of the new Jerusalem by John in this chapter, both predict the same period of the Christian church." Of the new Jerusalem John says, "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will
"dwell with them, and they shall be his people,
"and God himself shall be with them, and be their
"God." Of the city of which these things are said, may it not with the utmost propriety be said
"The Lord is there."

I have been the more particular in fixing the import of the high mountain as the scene of the vision,

vision, because the right knowledge of the scene of vision is the best key for opening up the time or period to which the vision refers. Thus in chap. x. 2. xiii. 1. xvii. 3. and xxi. 10. the particular scene of vision, in all these passages, clearly pointed out the particular time to which each of these visions referred. John was not carried away bodily to a high mountain. He was carried away "in the Spirit." This is the ordinary scriptural phrase for being under the immediate influence of divine inspiration. Not to mention many other passages of scripture, where this phrase is used to signify that a person is under the immediate influence of divine inspiration, it is thus used in this book, chap. i. 10. iv. 2. xvii. 3. and in this passage. By divine inspiration upon his mind, the same impressions were made, and the same ideas were raised in him, that would have been had he been actually carried away to and placed upon the top of a great and high mountain.

Upon that mountain the angel was to shew John the bride the Lamb's wife. By the bride the Lamb's wife is meant the new Jerusalem: for ver. 2d, it is said, "I John saw the holy city new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." And in verse 10th, after the angel had told John that he would shew him the bride the Lamb's wife, John says, "And he shewed me that great
" city

“ city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.” The reader is desired to read the whole lxii. chapter of Isaiah, in which the prophet predicting the millennial period says, that Jerusalem shall be called by a *new* name, viz. the *new Jerusalem*; and Beulah, or *married*: “ For the Lord delighteth in her, and her land shall be *married*. ! And she shall be called Sought out, “ A City not forsaken.”

In the symbolical language, the new Jerusalem and the bride the Lamb's wife both signify the same period and state of the church, even the millennial state. The former is as it were the proper name of it, and the latter the designation of that relation in which it stands to Christ. John must be carried up to the great and high mountain, before he could obtain a full view of the new Jerusalem as the bride the Lamb's wife; to signify that the state of the church, represented by these two synonymous symbols, shall not in fact appear in the world, until the time come when the kingdom of God shall be no longer “ the stone cut out without hands,” but “ the great and high mountain which fills the whole earth.” From this high mountain John in vision saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem; and by this hieroglyphic describes the purity, triumph, and glory, of the church of Christ during the millennial or mountain period of it. The unequalled grandeur and magnificence

cence of this city in general represents the unequalled grandeur and triumph of the church of Christ during that period. The beauty of this grand hieroglyphic will appear more striking on an examination of some of its principal parts.

“The new Jerusalem descends out of heaven from God.” The description of the city, for the wonderful assemblage of simplicity and of grandeur, baffles all human architecture. Then the church of Christ will not be modelled on the plan of this or that church or sect. Christians will not be bigots to the church of Rome, to the Lutheran church, to the church of England, to the church of Scotland, or to any other church. They shall not say, I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas; for they shall all be of Christ. And the Christian church shall in every respect correspond to the model of it which is contained in the inspired scriptures of the New Testament.

“This city shall have the glory of God in it.” It shall illustriously display the glory of God. To shew forth the glory of God shall be the chief aim and the happy attainment of every individual Christian, and of the church as a collective body. “Whether they eat, or drink, or whatsoever they do, they shall do all to the glory of God.” Her light, the symbol of purity and knowledge, shall be like the bright and uniform lustre of a precious stone. Her purity and knowledge shall be at

once very great, and very uniform and permanent. They shall not ebb and flow. They shall not change like the light of day unto the twilight and gloom of night.

“ It had a great and high wall ;” so great as to encircle every part of the church, though it shall then extend over almost the whole earth, and so high that no enemy shall be able to scale it. This great and high wall is that peculiar care with which divine providence shall then protect the church of Christ. Such is the account which Zechariah gives of this wall, when he predicts both it and the glory of God which shall be in the new Jerusalem, chap. ii. 1,—5. The reader is desired to look into this passage. I shall transcribe only verse 5th. “ For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her
“ a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory
“ in the midst of her.”

“ The city had twelve gates, at the gates twelve
“ angels, and names written thereon, which are
“ the names of the twelve tribes of the children of
“ Israel. On the east three gates ; on the north
“ three gates ; on the south three gates ; and on
“ the west three gates ” By gates to every quarter of the earth, it is signified that the church of Christ shall then become universal, and that men shall flock unto it from every quarter of the globe.

The

The gates are named after the twelve tribes of Israel, to signify that the Mosaic dispensation is introductory to, and as it were the gate unto the Christian dispensation. Then the Jews rightly understanding and believing Moses, shall believe in Jesus of whom Moses wrote. When the Jews shall enter the Christian church in a body, the Gentiles shall be led by their conversion to flock unto it from all quarters; so that in this respect the twelve tribes of Israel shall be the gates into the church of Christ to those who shall come from the east, from the north, from the south, and from the west. The preservation of the Jews distinct from every other people, though scattered so widely and for so long a time, and their universal conversion to the Christian faith, and restoration to their own land, all in the most exact correspondence with the ancient prophecies concerning them, will appear so miraculous, that infidelity itself shall be obliged to yield to such overpowering evidence of the truth of Christianity, and the fullness of the Gentiles shall then come into the Christian church, Rom. xi. 1,—27.

That the Jews shall be converted to the Christian faith in a body, shall be collected from all parts of the world whither they are scattered, and shall be put in possession of the land of Canaan, are clearly and frequently predicted by the prophets of God. And the whole train of divine pro-

vidence to that people, evidently appears preparatory to their conversion and to their return to their own land at the predicted time. Many passages of scripture contain general and dark hints, relative to the return of the Jews to their own land, and to their conversion in a body to the Christian faith: but in the following these two great events are predicted in a full, clear, particular, and striking manner. Nothing but prejudice or inattention can put another meaning upon Deut. xxxii. 43. Ezekiel xi. 4,—20, 36, 37. and xxxix. 23,—29. If any thing were necessary to render it more probable that such is the meaning of these predictions, and that these events shall take place in due time, the following facts might be stated. The original promise and grant of that land to Abraham and his seed for an *everlasting possession* by God himself:—The long dispersion of the Jews through all the countries of the world, in terms of the predictions of those very passages in which also their return is foretold;—the most uncommon care and accuracy with which they still preserve the genealogies of their tribes;—that they have no civil establishment in any country; and that notwithstanding the very great riches of many of them in money, they do not purchase land; by which uncommon peculiarities of their situation, they have no attachments in any country to make them unwilling to return to the land of Canaan:

—Their strong attachment to that land, and their ardent hope of being restored to it, which length of time neither weakens nor cools;—and that the Turks, the present inhabitants of that country, who obtained possession of it by violence, shall be mostly destroyed in that great war in the end of the year 1999, in which they and Papal Rome shall mutually destroy each other, so that the land of Canaan shall be left almost without inhabitants in the beginning of the year 2000, ready for the return of the Jews to the land which God gave unto Jacob his servant, wherein their fathers dwelt.

In this conversion of the Jews in a body, and in their return to their own land to a state of much greater prosperity than their fathers ever enjoyed, the two great external proofs of Christianity, prophecy and miracle, shall unite in so wonderful and powerful a manner that their evidence shall be irresistible. Their return to their own land, and their conversion to Christianity, will fully explain and confirm prophecy; and the whole of these events shall appear so miraculous, that no man will be able to deny that it is a work of God. In these events the finger of God will be evident. And thus the Israelites in entering into the church of Christ, shall set open its gates on every side for the fullness of the Gentiles to flock unto it from every quarter.

At

At these twelve gates there are twelve angels as porters, to admit every proper person, and to refuse admission to every improper one. By this symbol it is predicted, that the dispensations of divine providence and grace shall so be ordered, as on the one hand to conduct an innumerable multitude into the Christian church, and on the other hand to prevent the admission of any who are not true Christians, Israelites indeed in whom there is no guile.

The names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are inscribed upon the foundations of the wall of the city. Therefore it is not the old Jerusalem which was founded before the days of the apostles of Christ. It is not the Jewish church. But it is the new Jerusalem, the Christian church in its triumphant state, modelled in every respect upon the writings of the apostles of Christ.

The measure of the city is twelve thousand furlongs. That this measurement cannot apply to any real city, and does not signify any extent of space, is evident from the great length of it, even 150 English miles; and from this circumstance, that "the length, the breadth, and the height of the city are equal." Though vastly exceeding any city in the world, one may be supposed to be 150 miles long and broad; but to suppose a city 150 miles high is to exceed all proportion and all probability. But the 12000 is a number made up of 1000 the number of the years of the millennium multiplied

multiplied by 12 the number of the apostles; by the multiplication of which numbers a symbol is formed, which represents the church of Christ in its apostolical purity and simplicity, and at the same time in its millennial glory for the space of a thousand years.

The wall is 144 cubits. By the multiplication of 12, the number of the patriarchs, the representatives of the Jewish church, into 12, the number of the apostles of Christ, the representatives of the Christian church; the number 144 is produced, as a symbol both of the union and of the great increase or multiplication of the Jewish and Christian church. When this symbolical number of 144 is applied to the measurement of the *wall* of the city, the plain meaning of it is, that as the wall furrounds the city, both Jews and Gentiles shall be included within the new Jerusalem, both shall be greatly increased, and they shall all be faithful servants of God like the 144000 sealed ones, chap. vii. 4.

All the materials of which this city is built are of the most valuable kinds:—all manner of precious stones, pure gold, and pearls. These three are the material substances on which men put the highest value. These have all received their chief value from the creating hand of God. In many other substances on which the artist exerts his skill and industry, the workmanship exceeds the value
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of the materials. But whatever skill is exerted on any of these three kinds of materials, they always exceed the value of the work. By these, as the materials of which the city is constructed, it is symbolically said, that all the materials of which the Christian church shall then be composed shall be intrinsically and superlatively valuable as the works of God, independent of the refinements of men.

Verse 22d.—And I saw no temple therein : for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

As it was in the temple that the Jewish worship was performed, no temple being in the new Jerusalem signifies, that though the Jews shall then be admitted into the Christian church, the worship shall be Christian and not Jewish. As the temple is the symbol for external ordinances and ceremonies of worship, the want of it signifies, that the external ordinances of religious worship in the millennial state shall be very few and simple. They shall strictly accord to the gospel of Christ in its scriptural purity and simplicity. “For the “Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the “temple of it.” Then the one God shall be worshipped

worshipped in spirit and in truth, through Christ Jesus the one Mediator between God and man.

Verse 23.—And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

By the sun and moon are signified created and secondary causes of light. And as light is the symbol for knowledge, they signify the created, secondary, and ordinary sources of knowledge. The citizens of the new Jerusalem shall not much stand in need of the ordinary and slow methods of instruction in religious knowledge, which are so necessary and often so ineffectual in the present period; for they shall entertain such just views of the nature of God, his law shall be written so deep upon their hearts by his Spirit, and they shall trace the nature of truth, virtue, and real religion, so clearly in the character of Jesus, that they shall seldom mistake their duty, or want an inclination to do it. This happy condition of Christians in the millennial state Isaiah predicts, in almost the same words with those of this verse, chap. lx. 19. “The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an

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“everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.” Jeremiah in chap. xxxi. 33, 34. predicts the manner of acquiring religious knowledge, and the degree in which it shall be attained in that period.

Verses 24th,—27th.—And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

Not only shall individuals regulate their conduct by the light of gospel truth and by the will of God, but collective bodies also, even in their civil capacity, shall conform to the will of God, and to the great laws of the gospel. “The *nations* of them who are saved shall walk in the light of it. “And the *kings* of the earth shall bring their glory and honour into it.” Then there shall be civil governments, as well as in the present time, of different kinds, *nations* or republican; *kings* or
3 monarchial.

monarchical. But of whatever kinds they are, their constitution shall be good, and public affairs shall be well administered according to these constitutions. Both the governors and the governed shall conform to the will of God and to the laws of the gospel. No Cæsar shall then encroach upon the prerogatives of God, and no citizen shall withhold from God the things which are God's, nor from Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's. Pure and undefiled religion will make the people good and loyal citizens, and it will make kings supporters instead of persecutors of the church of Christ. Then, as Isaiah predicted of this period of the church, chap. xlix. 23. "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers."

During all that period there shall be no time to be compared to night on account of ignorance, misery, or danger. That whole period shall be like the day, in which men are favoured with light, enjoy themselves, and are not afraid of the attacks of thieves, robbers, and enemies.

The gates of the city shall be always open, to signify, that no enemy shall enter into nor attack the church of Christ, but that friends and votaries shall continually flock unto it. The civil powers shall greatly exert themselves to promote the security and success of the Christian church. They shall not indeed compel men by legal penalties

to profess themselves her votaries. Such compulsion, and such forced votaries she shall despise, as totally inconsistent with the nature of true religion. But they shall support her by entering her gates as friends, by becoming true Christians, and by conducting themselves, even in the administration of civil affairs, by the laws of truth, righteousness, and peace. Though the gates of the new Jerusalem shall be always open, though the entrance into Christ's church shall not be narrowed by human statutes, though even civil governments shall enter into it, and though its entrance shall be as wide as Christ hath made it ; no person who is polluted with error or sin, or who shall pollute others, none who worshippeth God in idolatry or hypocrisy, and none who maketh a lie, shall enter into the millennial state of the church. But those persons only shall enter it who are true Christians, having been made spiritually alive in Christ Jesus.

C H A P. XXII.

Verses 1st, 2d. **A**ND he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and of either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bore twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month : and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

The river of the water of life, and the tree of life, are symbols taken from the river which watered the terrestrial paradise, and from the tree of life which grew in the middle of it. As symbols, they signify in general, that this period of the church and of the world shall be a kind of paradisaical one, on account of its purity, simplicity, and happiness. These symbols signify in particular the food, by means of which the spiritual life is preserved and strengthened. In the paradisaical state, men lived on the fruits of trees, and drank of the pure water. Hence the tree of life, and the
water

water of life, signify the whole food which supports the spiritual life. True religion is the food of the spiritual life. It is this which preserves and invigorates in the soul that life which was first produced in it by the Spirit of God. Solomon calls true religion *a tree of life*, Proverbs. chap. iii. 18. "She "is a tree of life to them who lay hold upon her."

This tree of life had twelve manner of fruits. It is that system of religion which is contained in the inspired writings of the twelve apostles, and which is adapted to the actual situations of all men however diversified. It is the Christian system proceeding not only from God, but also from the Lamb, Jesus Christ.

The river ran down the middle of the city, and a tree of life grew on each side of the river, in the space between it and the streets of the city which ran parallel with the river. And the tree yielded its fruit every month. This symbol signifies that true religion shall then be so situated that no person shall be at any loss to find it, and all shall have the most easy access to it. In that period the religion of Jesus shall appear in the greatest purity and plenty, and shall preserve and strengthen the spiritual life in all the citizens of the new Jerusalem.

"And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Trees bear leaves as well as fruits. The leaves, by sheltering the blossoms
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the fruit from the inclemency of the weather, promote their growth. The tree of life also had leaves. As the tree of life signifies true religion, its leaves are the symbol for the means of religion; even those positive institutions, which, in the present state of the world, are as necessary to train men up to real religion, as the leaves of fruit-trees are, in such a world as this, to shelter the blossoms, and to nourish up the fruit to maturity. These leaves or positive institutions, few and simple as they shall be in that period, shall even then be necessary for the healing of the nations. So long as men shall be in this world, they shall be imperfect; so long as they are imperfect, they cannot arrive at absolute perfection in religion; so long as they are not absolutely perfect in religion, the proper means of religion shall be necessary for them. In heaven, the state of perfection, real religion shall exist without any positive institutions; and to such a state only is such pure, real, and perfect religion adapted. While men need any degree of healing, the leaves as well as the fruit of the tree of life shall be necessary. When they shall arrive in that world in which "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick," their whole religion shall be seated in their understanding and their heart, and shall be not the medicine but the food of the spiritual life for ever. By the perception of truth, and the exercise of right affections,

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the spiritual life, under the blessing of God, shall be preserved and invigorated throughout eternity. The reader is desired to consult Ezekiel iv. 7,—12.

Verse 3d.—And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.

The first clause of this verse runs thus in the original: *Και παν καταναθεμα εν εσαυ επι*; which should have been translated, “And the whole curse
“denounced against it shall not be yet.” The word *καταναθεμα* evidently refers to a curse denounced. The whole or final curse denounced against the earth, is contained in the last chapter of the prophecies of Malachi, verse 1. “For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven,
“and all the proud, yea and all that do wickedly,
“shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall
“burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it
“shall leave them neither root nor branch.” Verses 5th, 6th. “Behold I will send you Elijah
“the prophet before the coming of the great and
“dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn
“the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the
“heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come
“and smite the earth with a *curse*.” This final
curse

curse denounced upon the earth is farther explained by the apostle Peter, 2 Epif. iii. 7. "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men." Verse 10th, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works which are therein shall be burnt up."

It is evident from both these passages that the curse which is denounced against this earth is, "that it shall be burnt up," and that it is predicted that the millennium shall happen before this curse shall be inflicted upon the earth. For Malachi says verse 2d, "But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings, and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall," verses 5th, 6th. And Peter says, verse 13, "Nevertheless we according to his promise look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." When therefore it is said here that the whole curse shall not be yet, the import of this symbol is, that however great the wars and revolutions shall be by which Papal Rome shall be overthrown, and however awful the dispensations of divine providence shall be by which the millennium shall be

introduced, yet the end of the world shall not be then. The curse denounced upon the earth in the last word of the Old Testament shall not yet be inflicted. The millennial period, and even some more time shall first come. But how much more is not said. It is only said, that the curse shall not be yet. The same uncertainty of the precise time of the end of the world and of the day of judgment marks this passage, which runs through all those parts of scripture which refer to that day, "which none knoweth, nay not the angels in heaven, but God only,"

Here it may be observed, that this passage confirms the interpretation formerly given of the new heavens and the new earth, and of the new Jerusalem as representing not the heavenly state, but the millennial state of the church and of the world on this earth; since it assures us, that the earth shall not be burned up till after the termination of that state which is represented by the new Jerusalem. "The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him." Men shall then regulate their faith, worship, and obedience, by the laws of God published to the world through the mediation of Christ, as recorded in the scriptures of the New Testament. The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be the only throne erected in or over the church of Christ. The Christian church shall not be modelled

led in this or that country, according to the nature of the civil government of it. It shall not, like all established churches in the present period, gradually assimilate itself to the civil constitution of the state. But its constitution and its laws shall be uniform and unalterable, in every country of the world, and under every form of civil government. They shall be only such as have proceeded from the throne of God and of the Lamb. That constitution and these laws shall render her votaries good citizens, under every form of civil government.

“They shall serve God.” He who serves God is the best citizen and the best man, in every situation and relation in which men can be placed. The citizens of the new Jerusalem shall esteem it their glory, and feel it their happiness, to serve God and the Lamb. Here again we may observe, that God and the Lamb, that is Christ, are spoken of as *one*. It is not the *thrones*, but the *throne* of God and of the Lamb. It is not said *their* servants, but *his* servants shall serve him.

Verse 4th.—And they shall see his face; and his name shall be written on their foreheads.

It is by the face that men know each other, and it is in the face that the affections of the mind naturally express themselves; hence, in the symbolical language, *to see the face* of a person is to know that person distinctly. It shall be as impossible for them to doubt of the existence of God, as it would be to doubt of the existence of a person whom they see face to face. They shall entertain the most just apprehensions of the nature and character of God. Their knowledge shall be so quick and certain, that it shall approach very near to the intuitive kind.

The man who sees the face of his friend, without any length of time or of reasoning, by mere intuition recognises his friend. But the face is not the man, it is only on it that he recognises the man. In like manner, in every work of creation, of providence, and of grace, and especially in the character and conduct of Christ, they shall instantly and intuitively recognise the invisible God. In every one of these they shall perceive features, which cannot possibly apply to any other being but God, and which express perfections peculiar to the deity. Seeing him face to face, they shall be happy in communion with him. Pure in heart, they shall be blessed in seeing God.

Of Christians in this period Jeremiah predicts the knowledge, in terms of the same import with the words under our view, xxxi. 34. "And they
" shall

“ shall teach no more every man his neighbour,
“ and every man his brother, saying, Know the
“ Lord : for they shall all know me from the least
“ of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord.
“ And his name shall be in their foreheads.”

Those who openly professed themselves the votaries of Papal Rome are said, chap. xiii. 16. “ to
“ receive the mark of the beast in their fore-
“ heads.” Having the name of God in their fore-
heads signifies, that they shall avouch God for
their God, and openly profess themselves to be his
people. Though that modesty and humility
which ever attend true religion and real worth,
shall effectually hinder them from boasting of their
godliness, yet they shall never be ashamed of their
religion. They will regard it as the highest ho-
nour of the most exalted of men, to be allowed to
worship the one God through the one mediator
Christ Jesus ;—as the deepest and most refined
philosophy, to raise their views above all created
natures, and to contemplate the great God the
Creator of them all. They shall know, and not
be ashamed to acknowledge, that the nature of
God is, beyond all comparison, the noblest object
to which they can direct, and on which they can
employ, improve, and delight, all their intellec-
tual and moral powers. Followers of God as dear
children, the moral perfections of God shall shine
with

with such lustre in their characters, that his name shall as it were be visible in their foreheads.

Verse 5th.—And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them light : and they shall reign for ever and ever.

In that enlightened and happy period there shall be no ignorance nor sorrow, and little need of those means which are necessary now to communicate knowledge and comfort to mankind. The Lord God shall give them comfort and joy. They shall be taught of God ; he will put his law within them, and write it upon their hearts. Their knowledge of God will so greatly enlarge their intellectual powers and purify their hearts, that they shall clearly perceive every other object of knowledge which it is proper for them to know. Their supreme affections placed on God will qualify them for relishing every other object which they possess, comfort them under the loss of every object of which they are deprived, and prove at all times a fund of the most refined and exquisite joy.

“ And they shall reign for ever and ever.”
With these words John closes the full explication
of

of the new Jerusalem or millennial state. Some men might be ready to say, this millennial state is glorious and happy ; but, being only for a thousand years, it will come to an end, and the citizens of the new Jerusalem may be conquered by their enemies. But, saith the spirit of prophecy, entertain no such fear ; for true Christians shall reign for ever and ever. They shall never more be persecuted by devils and wicked men, as their forefathers were under Heathen and Papal Rome. At the end of the thousand years, the devil shall be loosed for a short time, and Gog and Magog shall compass the camp of the saints about and the beloved city ; and thus, by raising wars in the earth after they had ceased for a thousand years, shall put an end to the millennium ; but they shall not put an end to the reign and triumph of the saints on earth. For the devil and Gog and Magog shall be defeated in these wars. Gog and Magog shall be destroyed by fire from heaven, and the devil shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where he shall be tormented day and night for ever.

After the commencement of the millennium, Christians shall not be conquered by any enemies on earth, and their reign shall not terminate with this earth. "On them the second death shall have no power." The same truth, righteousness, peace, and joy which constitute their kingdom

dom

dom and reign on the earth, shall in higher degree of perfection accompany them to heaven, for ever improve, and constitute their reign for ever and ever.

Before this earth and the works that are therein shall be burnt in the general conflagration, “the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel and trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first : then they who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall they ever be with the Lord.”

As the seventh day sabbath is the type or symbol of the seventh millenary or great sabbath of the whole earth, so it is probable that the first day of the week, the Lord's day, is the type of that reign of the Christian church, after the millennium until the general resurrection, and in heaven for ever and ever. The Lord's day, or first day of the week, though frequently mentioned in scripture as the day set apart for the public worship of God in the Christian church, is always described in very general terms. May not one reason of this be, that it is not, like the seventh day, the type of a determinate period of time ; but the type of indefinite time, even of the eternal reign of the saints in heaven, and therefore best expressed in general or indefinite terms.

Verse

Verse 6th.—And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

All the sayings of this book are truths of God, and all the predictions in it shall be faithfully accomplished in due time. That God who is the Lord and sovereign of all the holy prophets, who dictated to them what they revealed to men, and whom they cheerfully obeyed and devoutly worshipped as their God, sent a particular angel, who, on account of some peculiarities in his character or office is styled peculiarly *his* angel, to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. This angel is the same one, and the trust committed to him is the same, that was mentioned in chap. i. 1. He was the particular and intermediate agent between Jesus Christ and John, in conveying to John the things contained in this book. The prophecies of this book are things which must shortly be done. The first of them were accomplished in the days of John, immediately after this revelation was made to him; and ever since that time the succeeding predictions have been gradually fulfilled in the strictest conformity to the chain of prophecy contained in this book. The angel was

to shew them to the servants of God. The book is left open to the inspection of all; but the servants of God only perceive the meaning of the predictions, in so far as it is fit for supporting their faith and patience. So much are even the intellectual powers of man blinded or turned aside by his wishes, his propensities, or his aversions, that the servants of this or that church, of this or that vice, and of this or that erroneous opinion, see every thing, and these prophecies among the rest, through a glass which gives them its own colour. But they who are the servants of the Lord, these upright, candid, pious, and diligent men, who in matters of religion have no other wish but to discover and obey the will of God, shall see every thing, and among the rest these prophecies in their own colour. "The high way of the upright is to depart from evil."

Verse 7th.—Behold I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

Christ cometh quickly in the accomplishment of the predicted events. In the first of them he came quickly after the revelation was made to John. And he comes at the predicted time in every one of them. The same blessing which was pronounced in chap. i. 3. on those who keep the sayings

sayings of the prophecy of this book, is repeated in this verse when the book draws near to a close. Those whom God blesses are blessed indeed. Is not this a powerful motive to the study of the prophecies of this book? For, unless we know them we cannot keep them in a way that may be styled duty, or in a way to which a blessing is affixed. Those who keep them shall be blessed in all the situations of life, even the most calamitous, by that support which they shall afford to their faith and patience, and by that improvement and delight which they shall communicate to their heads and hearts, under the blessing of God. And they shall be qualified for the enjoyment of unspeakable and endless bliss in a future state.

Verses 8th, 9th.—And I John saw these things and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not : for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book : worship God.

John informs us that he does not relate these prophecies as legendary tales or stories, which had

been handed to him by uncertain tradition : but that he saw and heard them. He saw all the visions, and he heard all the explications of them which were made by the angels. He was as fully persuaded of the reality of the impressions made upon his mind by the visions which are represented in this book, as he could have been if he had actually seen them with his bodily eyes, and actually heard with his bodily ears the information given by the angels. The nature of the impressions made upon the mind, and of the manner in which the ideas are excited in it by prophetic visions, was formerly explained. Let it only be observed here, that the impressions made, and the ideas excited in the mind in these ways, are as real, strong, and distinct, as those are which are excited in the mind by visible or audible objects, through the ordinary channels of the eyes and ears ; and they are of the same kind too. Consequently, the person who is conscious of these impressions and ideas, is as much an eye and ear witness of what he attests from such perceptions, as the man is who attests what he saw and heard. John therefore is to be regarded as an eye and ear witness of all the things which he relates in this book. This assertion farther implies, that without altering the visions or declarations in any respect, John, with the most faithful simplicity, related them

them exactly as they had been communicated to his mind.

On this occasion John fell down again before the angel, in order to worship him. And he was again prevented by the angel; who told him that he was not the object of religious worship, for he was a servant of God as well as he, and engaged in a work similar to that in which he and all the other prophets had been employed, even in communicating the will of God to mankind, and testifying of Jesus; and that he was a fellow-servant of them who keep the sayings of this book. Like them, he believed and candidly received divine revelation, confidently trusted to the accomplishment of these predictions, and therefore obeyed the will of God. The angel again directs John to worship God only. Those who worship angels, not only idolatrously rob God of his prerogative; but also seem to know better what is due to angels than they do themselves. This whole matter was fully explained in the commentary on chap. xix. 20. to which the reader is referred.

Verse 10th.—And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

John is commanded not to seal the sayings of the prophecy of this book, In the last chapter of
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the prophecies of Daniel, that prophet is commanded to seal his book, verse 4th, "But thou O Daniel
" shut up the words, and *seal* the book even to the
" time of the end:" and verse 9th, "And he said,
" Go thy way Daniel: for the words are closed up
" and *sealed* till the time of the end." It was thus signified in the symbolical language that the hints given by Daniel of the Papal hierarchy, of the wilderness state of the Christian church, and of the millennial state of it, were designedly so short and obscure, that this part of his prophecies was as a sealed book, and should continue so to *the time of the end*; that is, to the last or gospel times, when a prophet should be sent to explain and illustrate these hints. Accordingly, that prophecy of Daniel is represented as a sealed book in chap. v. 1. of this book, and Christ enables John by visions to open up and explain it in the prophecies of this book. Hence, when it is said to John in this verse, "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this
" book," it is declared in the symbolical language, that no succeeding prophet shall be sent to unfold the mysteries of this book, as John hath done those of the prophecy of Daniel; that it is left open for the inspection and study of all; and that it may be understood by the candid, intelligent, and studious, under the ordinary blessing of God, without any aid from prophetic inspiration.

In

In the close of the verse this reason is assigned for leaving it open, "for the time is at hand." And it is the very strongest reason for not sealing up a prophecy. The time of the accomplishment of its first predictions was at hand when John wrote this book, and they were actually fulfilled accordingly. And as it contains a close chain of prophecies from the days of John to the end of the world, the time is at hand in every age for the accomplishment of some or other of its predictions. Those persons who live in the time in which the predicted events shall happen, are most deeply interested in the prophecy of them; it is therefore fit that it should be left open to them, "because the time is at hand." Dark prophecies are best understood when the events have taken place, and the predictions can be compared with the events. As prophecies are best understood when the time is at hand, it is certainly highly proper that in that case they should be left open for the inspection of all.

For near 1700 years, events predicted in this book have been happening. Hence, we enjoy every advantage for understanding all the predictions which foretell events previous to the present day, which can be derived from the events themselves as explanatory of what is dark in the predictions. Those men act very preposterously indeed, who, by despising this book, seal it up when not only is the time at hand, but with respect to far

the greatest part of it, the time is past. Neither present nor past events will of themselves explain the full meaning of the predictions which refer to them. They explain the predictions to those persons only, who with candour, judgement, and diligence, study the meaning of the predictions, observe present events, and from authentic history make themselves acquainted with those which are past. He who does not understand the great outlines of prophecy at least, however accurately he observes present events or knows past ones, can never say whether or not they agree to the predictions. And on the other hand, though he hath acquired a tolerable knowledge of the meaning of the prediction, he cannot say that it hath been accomplished in the present or in former times, unless he hath searched the history of the times which are past, and observed with accuracy the events which take place in the world around him. Before we can make a just comparison of any two objects, we must have a distinct knowledge of them both.

Verse 11th.—He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

Some

Some might be ready to say, a book of prophecy so expressed as to be understood before the events take place and left open to the inspection of all, will defeat its own ends. Men seeing beforehand the part which it predicts they shall act, will guard against that conduct, and thereby defeat the prophecy. But, saith the spirit of prophecy, such shall not be the consequence of leaving the book open to all, though expressed in such terms as may be understood without the aid of a new revelation. This unsealed prophecy shall impose no restraint upon the conduct or the motives of men. Those who are unjust will be unjust still, those that are filthy shall be filthy still. He that is righteous shall be righteous still, and he that is holy shall be holy still.

A prophecy expressed not merely in the symbolical language, but even in the plainest alphabetical language, would never hinder a single person from accomplishing its predictions, nor from acting that part which it ascribes to him. In the present perverted state of human nature, there is some unaccountable bias in man, which in spite of the strongest evidence makes him disbelieve what he does not wish to believe. Many, clear, and full, were the prophecies in the Old Testament concerning Messiah, and they were fulfilled in the most minute and striking manner in Jesus. But though the Jews who lived in the days

of Christ believed the divine inspiration of these prophecies, and knew the history and life of Jesus, yet instead of acknowledging him as the Messiah, they rejected and even crucified him, and thereby fulfilled the very prophecies, which though clear in themselves, and rendered doubly so by the events, they would not believe. And hence, it was justly said to them in Acts ii. 23. "Him (Christ) " being delivered by the determinate counsel and " foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by " wicked hands have crucified and slain."

The prophecies of God, however clear, will never prevent their own accomplishment, nor take away the liberty and responsibility of man for his conduct. The Jews in crucifying Jesus fulfilled the prophecies concerning them, without intending to do so, nay from a very different and criminal intention. While executing the determinate counsel of God, they intended another thing, and therefore did it with wicked hands. Similar is the case with men in every country and age with respect to even the clearest prophecies. There always have been, and there always will be, abundance of men to disbelieve, in order to accomplish the prophecies of God. For instance, though the predictions concerning the Papal hierarchy had been clearer if possible than they are, that hierarchy would have been erected, would not have been finally dissolved until the year 1999, would have

have had many votaries, and they would never have applied these predictions to themselves.

This observation does not apply to prophetic writings only. The constitutions, the tempers, the educations, the habits, the interests, and the inclinations of men, are so various, and have so powerful an influence in warping their understanding, that the plainest didactic writings are grossly misunderstood and misapplied by some men. Some men disbelieve and deny the plainest doctrines of the bible. Some deny divine revelation altogether. Some are unjust and filthy, notwithstanding the plain precepts and awful denunciations of sacred scripture against sin, the powerful motives to holiness contained in it, the dictates of conscience, and even their present respectability and interest. Let none therefore be afraid that the clearest prophecy or the plainest comment upon it will ever defeat its own end by preventing its accomplishment. And let none be surprized that this should be the case, since such conduct in men, relative to prophetic writings, is so strictly analogous to their ordinary conduct relative to all other writings which are addressed to the heart as well as to the understanding.

In this verse the present tense of the imperative is used, instead of the future of the indicative. Instead of saying he that is unjust *shall* be unjust still, it is said he that is unjust *let* him be unjust still.

This mode of expreffion is agreeable to the Hebrew idiom frequently ufed in prophetic writings, efpecially in the book of Pfalms. Not to detain the reader with other instances, it is faid in Pfalm cix. 8. “*Let* his days be few, and *let* another take “his office.” This paffage the infpired author of the Acts of the Apoftles in chap. i. 16,—20. expreffly informs us is a prophecy concerning the the traitor Judas. “Men and brethren this fcripture muft needs have been fulfilled which the “Holy Ghost bythe mouth of David fpake before “concerning Judas, which was guide to them who “took Jefus. For it is written in the book of “Pfalms, *Let* his habitation be defolate, and *let* “no man dwell therein : and his bishopric *let* ano- “ther take.” This idiom is introduced with peculiar propriety in this verfe. The very construction of the language intimates, that the clearnefs of the prophecy fhall have no more influence in making wicked men abandon their wickednefs and defeat the prophecy, than it could have had if they had been under an exprefs and fupreme command to be unjuft ftill. And the knowledge of the predictions, inftead of checking the righteous and holy, will ftrengthen their faith and patience, and animate their zeal.

Verfe

Verse 12th.—And behold I come quickly ; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Jesus came quickly in the events which accomplished the first predictions in this book. He will come much sooner in all the predicted events in every age than the generality of the men of that age shall expect, those of the millennian one only excepted. In all these events he will reward every man according as his work shall be. The truly religious man shall taste the comforts and joys of religion here. And to the wicked there shall be no peace, for his heart is like the troubled sea, which cannot rest. The vials of divine wrath shall be poured out on Antichrist's kingdom, in temporal judgements exactly assimilated to their public crimes ; and the kingdom of God shall become triumphant on earth so soon as the world shall be fully prepared for such a state. When the bride shall have made herself ready, she shall become the Lamb's wife. When the gold shall be completely refined in the furnace, with it, pure as transparent glass, shall the streets of the new Jerusalem be paved. To every individual person shall Christ come quickly by death. Ere long every man living in any country or period of the world, shall be called from this world by an authority as

irresistable

irresistible as that which shall bring about the events predicted in this book. To the greatest part of men this call shall be given sooner than they expect, and at a time when they are not looking for it. Then every man shall receive a final doom from Christ, not for, but strictly conformable to, his works. It shall then be well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked. How powerful a motive is this to make men take heed to their works?

Verse 13th.—I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.

Jesus informs John who he is, “The Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.” That divine person who gave beginning to this world by creating it; and who shall put an end to it by judging the men and burning the earth:—that person who inspired the prophets, and in whom all the prophecies terminate. This is the same appellation with that given to Jesus in chap. i. 8.

Verse 14th.—Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

The

The words "*his* commandments" should have been translated "*its* commandments:" for "*this* "*book*" mentioned in verses 7th, 8th, and 9th, is the antecedent to this relative expression, as is evident from our translation, and still more so from the original Greek. They who do its commandments are those who regulate their faith, worship, and obedience, by the commandments recorded in this book; who keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus. In general, they are those who habitually regulate their conduct by the commandments of God as recorded in the sacred scriptures.

The middle clause of the verse runs thus in the original: *ἵνα ἔσται ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον*, which should have been translated, "that they may have "power (or rather licence) of the tree of life." *ἐξουσία* is derived from *ἐξέσσι* licet.

It was formerly shewn that the tree of life signifies true religion in its millennial purity, which is the food of the spiritual life in the soul. The city is the new Jerusalem, the city described in this and the preceding chapter as the hieroglyphic of the millennial state of the church. In the last verse of chap. xxi. it is declared that no wicked persons shall enter the gates of that city, that is, become members of the millennial church, but only those persons who are spiritually alive in Christ Jesus. Hence the plain meaning of this
verse

verse is, that the way which God hath appointed for men to acquire true religion, and which he blesses for that purpose to all who use it, is the doing of his commandments as they are recorded in sacred scripture. That the way of conformity to his commandments is the gate through which in every age true votaries shall be introduced into the true church of Christ, and through which in particular they shall be introduced into the millennial church. In doing his commandments, God gives men the faculty and licence to regain that true religion which they had lost by the depravity of their natures, and which they could not regain by human wisdom or commandments of men. 1 Corin. i. 21. Matth. xv. 19. James i. 21,—25. They who do the commandments of sacred scripture shall be blessed thus in the honest and diligent use of those very means of religion which God himself hath provided for obtaining it, they shall receive that divine blessing and aid which shall conduct them in the way of God's commandments to the actual attainments of true religion. If they live in the millennial age of the church, they who do the commandments of God shall be members of that church, which shall be purified from all the commandments of men taught as doctrines, and consequently fit for those men only who do the commandments of God. Possessors of true religion, and the members of so pure and

and prosperous a church, they shall be blessed and happy in this world, and raised to higher degrees of endless happiness in a future world. For the citizens of the new Jerusalem shall reign for ever and ever. And if they live in the present or any other age previous to the millennium, by doing the commandments of God, they shall, under the divine blessing, undoubtedly learn that true religion which is the food of the spiritual life; and they shall become members of the true and universal church of Christ, of which the millennial church is an illustrious part. And let their outward situations be what they will they shall be blessed.

I am convinced that there never was an instance of a man, who habitually endeavoured to do the commandments of God, as recorded in sacred scripture, and yet did not find true religion; nor of one whose soul was enlightened, purified, and strengthened by true religion, who did not enjoy, in proportion to his attainments in religion, a degree of refined happiness in God, in himself, in the creatures of God, and in all the dispensations of divine providence and grace. Men who with a narrow bigotry attach themselves to this or that church, modelled in many of its parts upon human inventions, and who view that as the only church of God on earth, shall feel their minds often distressed for its safety, when they see its risings and de-

clinings like all the kingdoms of men. But he who knows that the church of Christ consists of all those scattered individuals through the whole world who do the commandments of God, in whatever visible church they outwardly worship God, entertains no fears for his church. He knows that such an universal kingdom erected in the hearts of Christians is the kingdom of God, and that the wisdom and power of God will support his own kingdom against all opposition and danger. He contemplates with delight its progress in the world. He beholds all things working together for its good. He sees the progress of learning, liberty, and commerce, bringing its hidden treasures to view, and carrying the knowledge of it to distant nations. He perceives even persecution purging it from the corruptions produced by the stagnations of peace and outward prosperity, and driving upright men against their will from their native land to carry true religion, as the apostles of Jesus, to nations sitting in darkness and under the shadow of death. He looks forward with exultation to the millennial state of the church, when this kingdom of God shall extend over all the kingdoms of the world, and when its subjects shall be nearly as numerous as the men who shall inhabit the earth. He looks up to heaven, and with a joy truly heavenly recognises a church there, in which

which no single person who on earth did the commandments of God is wanting. His trust in God is firm. Of the church of Christ he never despairs. His benevolence to men is as extensive as human nature. His brotherly affection to Christians is as large as the character of Christian and the church of Christ. With that affection he loves all who he believes love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; though by differing in lesser matters some should say, I am of Paul, some, I am of Apollos, or some, I am of Cephas, provided they are in reality and in essentials of Christ. How happy must such a person be, and how well must he be trained up by such views, affections, and conduct, for happiness in a future state.

Verse 15th.—For without are dogs, and forcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

Both in the millennian and in the present state of the true and universal church of Christ, all persons of the following characters, whatever they may pretend, are not members of it, nor shall they be members of it in the heavenly state if they live and die of these characters.—All contentious and quarrelsome persons, all who use charms and in-

cantations, all sensual persons, all cruel persons and murderers, all idolaters, and all who love a lie or make a lie. Every person who thinks coolly on the subject, must clearly perceive that persons of all these characters are unfit to worship and enjoy God, or to enjoy the true happiness of man in any stage of his existence.

Verse 16th.—I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches; I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

Jesus informs John that he had sent his angel to testify unto him the things which are contained in this book, not on his account only, but also on account of the churches. The words translated *in the churches* are *ἐπι ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις*, which should have been translated, on account of the churches. For *ἐπι* most commonly signifies *propter*, on account of, which governs the dative, as it does in this verse. These prophecies were published for the benefit and advantages of the churches of Christ. They were revealed to John, that, in the first place, having committed them to writing, he might communicate them to the seven Christian churches at that time in Asia. Jesus expressly commanded John to
send

send them to these churches, chap. i. 11. and John addressed them to them accordingly, chap. i. 4. By divine providence they were to be preserved and sent in due time to all the Christian churches in the world, in order to support their faith and patience.

In this verse Jesus declares his divine and human nature, by styling himself both "the root and the offspring of David." As the root of David, he communicated existence and life to David. In his divine nature he was before David and before Abraham. As the offspring of David, in his human nature he sprang from David. In that nature he was descended in the straight line from David, as appears from his genealogies recorded in Matth. chap. i. and Luke chap. iii. Isaiah prophecies of Christ as the offspring of David, ch. xi. 1. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." In Ps. cx. 1. He is styled David's Lord. On these words of the Psalmist Jesus puts to silence the captious Pharisees. And indeed they must put to silence every person who does not acknowledge the divine and the human nature of Christ. Mat. xxii. 41,—46. "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. " He

“ He saith unto them, How then doth David in
“ spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said un-
“ to my lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I
“ make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then
“ call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man
“ was able to answer him a word, neither durst a-
“ ny man (from that day forth) ask him any
“ more questions.” He is also the bright and
morning star;—that divine teacher, who hath
knowledge and truth in himself, and who like the
morning star dispells the clouds of night, and ush-
ers in the light of day. He is the true light
which lighteneth every man that cometh into
the world. He is the glory of his antient peo-
ple Israel, and the light to enlighten the Gentiles.

Verse 17th.—And the Spirit and the Bride
say, Come. And let him that heareth say,
Come. And let him that is athirst come.
And whosoever will, let him take of the wa-
ter of life freely.

The Holy Spirit of God is represented as desir-
ing that Christ's kingdom may come. The Spirit
of God, by his gracious influences on the hearts of
men, promotes the interests of that kingdom in e-
very period of it. But this passage refers chiefly
to the millennial state, which in scripture is most
commonly

commonly represented by the coming of Christ's kingdom. That period shall in a peculiar manner be the reign of the Holy Spirit. Satan bound for a thousand years shall not then influence the conduct of men. The Spirit of God shall then put his laws in their inward parts, and write them upon their hearts. They shall all be taught of God.

The bride faith come. The true church of Christ looks forward to, and prays for that pure, glorious, and happy state of the church. They all pray, as taught by Christ, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Let every one who heareth of the kingdom of God pray that it may come. This is his duty. The hearing of that kingdom, if he does not pray for its prosperity and promote its interest, will greatly aggravate his guilt and his doom. For, to whomsoever much is given, of them the more will be required. Let him that is athirst come. Let every one who sincerely and ardently desires to know and do the will of God, come. Such desires will lead him towards, and qualify him for finding the way of righteousness and joy. He shall come, along with the other subjects of Christ's kingdom, as one of the citizens of Zion. "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

And

“ And whosoever *will*, let him take the water
“ of life freely.” The gospel of Jesus closes with
this extensive and gracious invitation and exhorta-
tion with which it was at first opened, and which
runs through every part of that system of truth and
grace. The angel who announced the birth of
Christ to the shepherds of Bethlehem, said unto
them : “ Behold I bring you good tidings of great
joy, which shall be to *all people*.” Isaiah says,
“ Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the wa-
“ ters, and he that hath no money come ye, buy
“ and eat, yea come and buy wine and milk with-
“ out money and without price.” Jesus complain-
ed thus of infidel men, “ Ye *will not come* to me
“ that ye may have life.” And he says, “ If any
“ man *will do* the will of God, he shall know of
“ the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether
“ I speak of myself.” And commissioning his a-
postles to preach the gospel, he said unto them,
“ Go ye unto all the world, and preach the gospel
“ to *every creature*.” The plain import of all these
passages, which are exactly parallel to the one now
under our view is, that the gospel is a system of re-
ligion and a scheme of salvation intended for all
men, that it is freely offered to all men, and that
it is want of *will* which hinders any of these men
to whom it is actually offered to embrace it. They
will not come unto the light, lest their evil deeds
should

should be reprov'd. Let every man who inclines to do it embrace that true religion which is represented by the water of life. It is offered to him, not for any merit of his own, but freely ; or as the Greek word (*δωρεαν*) signifies, as a *gift*. If he does not embrace it, he shall have nothing to blame for his bad conduct but his own obstinate will.

Verses 18th, 19th.—For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book : and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

This book being finished, these verses contain a solemn and awful threatening against every man who shall knowingly and intentionally add to or take from the things which are contained in it. This threatening, founded in the very nature of inspired scripture, is placed with peculiar fitness in the end of the book which closes the canon of sacred scripture. It is a solemn intimation that the sacred canon is closed, and a warning to men not

to be imposed upon by any later writings which may lay claim to inspiration. It is also a solemn and awful warning given to every man who reads and hears inspired scripture, not intentionally to add any thing as the word of God which is not contained in scripture, nor to take away from it any thing which is contained in that sacred record. One can scarce suppose a higher degree of impiety and wickedness than a deliberate intention in any respect to corrupt these writings, which are inspired, and which we believe to be so. If any man does so, both the nature of the thing, and the express denunciation of God, declare that he shall be deprived of all the blessings promised in this book, and exposed to all the plagues which are denounced in it.

Under, I trust, a just impression of this awful threatening, of the sacred nature of truth, and of the dignity of divine revelation, I have not knowingly and intentionally added to nor taken from the things contained in this book in the commentary which I have written upon it. If therefore any thing is said in this commentary which gives offence to any individual or any society of men, it was said, not to give them offence; but because I believe it is said in the prophecies of this book, and therefore I durst not take it away. It was said, because I trust I fear God more than man, and desire the praise of God more than the praise
of

of man. If in any thing I have erred, I have erred neither intentionally through negligence ; nor, if I know my own heart, through prejudice. Unfettered by system or interest, I began and proceeded all along with a sincere desire and fervent prayer to God that I might clearly discover the truth, and fairly communicate it when discovered. If in any thing I have erred without intention or negligence, a gracious God will not impute such error as a fault. And I shall always with gratitude and pleasure discover and correct any such error, who or whatever shall be the instrument under divine providence of leading me to perceive it.

Verse 20th.—He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so come Lord Jesus.

Jesus declares that he will come quickly in the accomplishment of all the events predicted in this book. The first of them shall happen soon after the prediction, and none of them shall be delayed a moment beyond the time which is fixed for them in the prophecy. The church gives her Amen to this, and re-echoes, Even so come Lord Jesus. The church of Christ shall welcome every dispensation of divine providence as the fittest and best. Even though at particular times clouds and darkness may appear around the Governor of
the

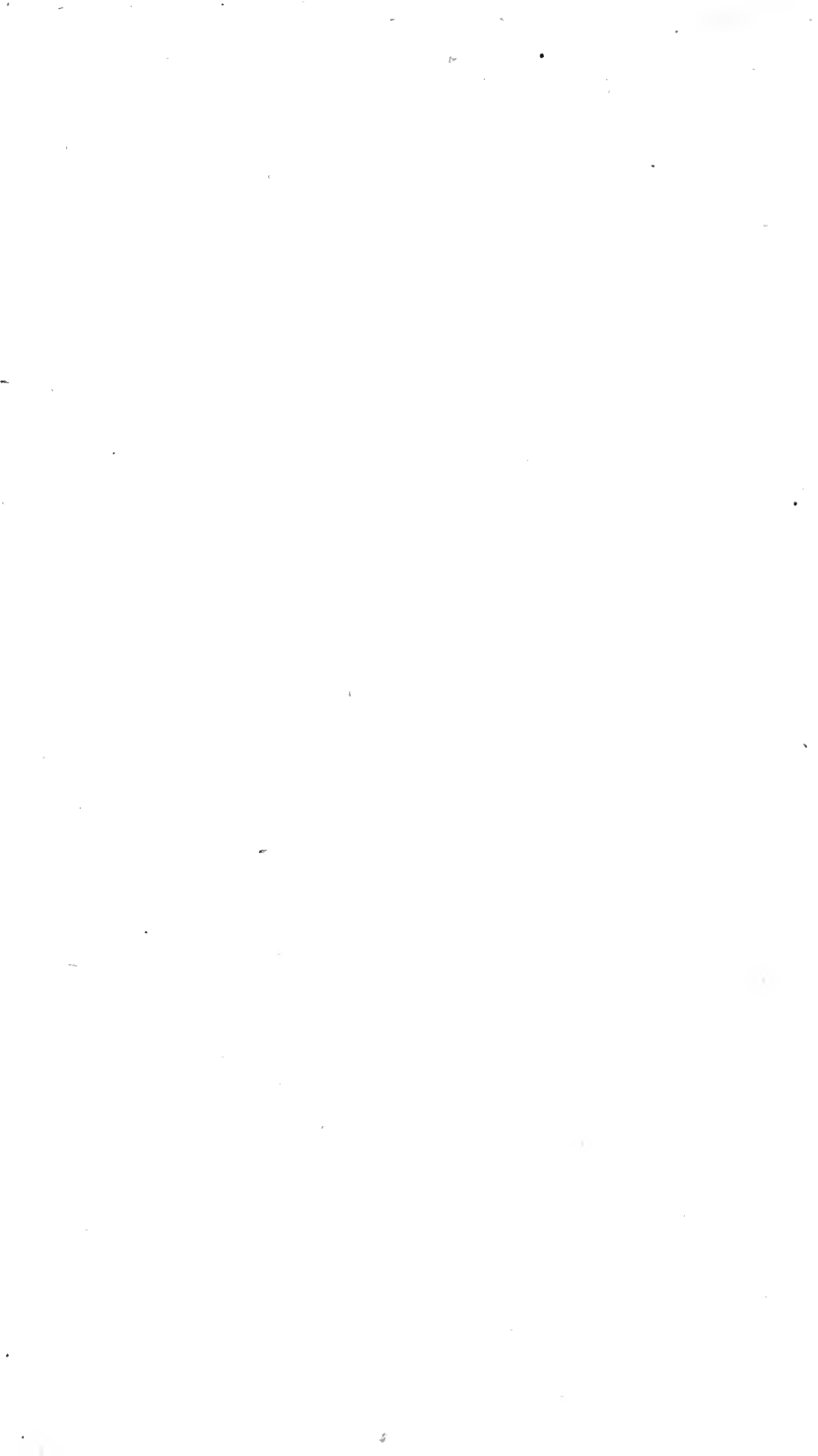
the world, the Christian ever rests satisfied that justice and judgement are the habitation of his throne, and that mercy and truth ever go before his face.

Verse 21st.—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

With this apostolic benediction and prayer John closes this book, and with it the canon of inspired scripture. With it the apostle Paul closes the greatest part of his epistles. It is the most comprehensive prayer which can be conceived. The grace of Christ signifies the free favour of Christ; and consequently comprehends under it all those gracious divine blessings, which are conveyed to men in the gospel of Jesus from God, through the mediation of Christ and the influence of the Holy Spirit. He prays for all these free and inestimable blessings to them all; to all the seven churches then in Asia, to all the churches of Christ in every country and age, and especially to every true Christian as an individual. Amen. So let it be. By this word he closes his prayer, and expresses his assent to the truth of it, and his sincere desire that its request may be granted by the Hearer of prayer.

F I N I S.







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